



Barry G. Wells

managerial effectiveness and who have developed improvements in the administration of the federal Judiciary.

2001 recipient of the Director's Award for Excellence in Court Operations:

- Barry G. Wells, Automation Division Manager
U. S. Bankruptcy Court, Virginia-Eastern



Michael E. Gans

2001 recipients of the Director's Award for Outstanding Leadership:

- Michael E. Gans, Clerk of Court
U.S. Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit
- Joseph A. Giacobbe, Chief Probation Officer
U.S. District Court, New York-Western



Joseph A. Giacobbe

The Director also awarded Special Judiciary Leadership Awards to

- Luther D. Thomas, Clerk of Court
U.S. District Court, Georgia-Northern
- Norman E. Zoller, Circuit Executive
U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit

Communications

The Administrative Office is the Judiciary's central point of contact for public information. Staff provide a wide range of communications services for judges, court staff, and the Administrative Office, and serve as liaisons between the Judiciary and the news media. They promote public awareness and understanding of the Judiciary, facilitate and enhance communications within the Judiciary, and provide public affairs support to the Judicial Conference and its committees and to courts.

Highlights of communications activities in 2001:

Consultation with Court Officials

Advisory groups play a critical role in providing user and customer input to the Administrative Office that is essential to the development of policy recommendations and to the deployment of useful programs, systems, and services.

In 2001, efforts to improve communication and collaboration between the Administrative Office and federal courts on information technology were begun, such as designating a liaison to participate in circuit information technology conferences and advisory council meetings, monthly FJTN broadcasts focusing on information technology, and increased dissemination of information through published articles and reports.

Internet

The Administrative Office maintains an Internet site, www.uscourts.gov. This web site

Internet Use Policy

In March 2001, the Judicial Conference was notified that the Judiciary's Internet resources were being severely taxed. The Committee on Automation and Technology met to review these issues and made recommendations to the Conference. In September 2001, the Judicial Conference accepted changes to the Committee report and unanimously took the following actions:

- Reaffirmed the responsibility of the Administrative Office, under the direction of the Judicial Conference, for operations and security of the Internet gateways.
- Directed that a review of the system architecture be completed in 2002.
- Adopted, on an interim basis, a model Internet use policy, subject to the right of each court unit to impose or maintain more restrictive policies.
- Adopted a definition of "inappropriate personal use that prohibits the downloading of sexually explicit materials and materials related to gambling, illegal weapons, or terrorist activities."
- Reaffirmed that individual courts have the responsibility to enforce appropriate use policies.
- Directed the Administrative Office, as part of its regular audit process, to examine and comment upon the adequacy of the court's enforcement methods.
- Directed the Administrative Office to block such network traffic as Gnutella, Napster, Glacier, and Quake, and delegated to the committee the authority to block other tunneling protocols that may cause security breaches.

Publications

The Administrative Office continued its efforts to enhance the quality, usefulness, and effectiveness of its publications for judges, court managers, other court employees, and the public in 2001. Most of the agency's publications are available in electronic format, as well as in print.

Among this year's publishing achievements:

- 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.
- Fair Employment Practices Report.
- Federal Court Management Report.
- Federal Court Management Statistics.
- Federal Probation.
- The Home Confinement Program Review.
- Legal Manual for United States Magistrate Judges.
- News and Views.
- Report to Congress on the Optimal Utilization of Judicial Resources.
- The Third Branch.

provides information to the public on federal courts. A redesign of the site in 2001 makes navigating easier. Content was reorganized with users' needs in mind.

Many courts make information available to the public through the Internet. As a result, they receive fewer calls regarding 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.

Privacy and Public Access

In support of the Judicial Conference Committee on Court Administration and Case Management, the Administrative Office completed a two-year study on how to balance privacy concerns with the rights of the public to access court electronic records. The Judicial Conference adopted the Report on Privacy and Public Access to Electronic Case Files in September 2001, and the Administrative Office currently is working on implementing the report's privacy policy recommendations throughout the Judiciary.

Electronic Public Access Program

In fiscal year 2001, the Electronic Public Access Program, known as PACER, registered more than 50,000 new accounts and generated \$11.5 million for



the Judiciary. A significant portion of this revenue was used to fund the development and deployment of the Case Management/Electronic Case Files (CM/ECF) system.

J-Net

The Judiciary’s intranet site, J-Net, offers a collection of information that is shared electronically. J-Net helps achieve savings as it disseminates information in place of paper documents. An assessment of the site was launched in 2001 to determine how J-Net can best meet its users needs. A final report and recommendations will be available in 2002.

Community Outreach

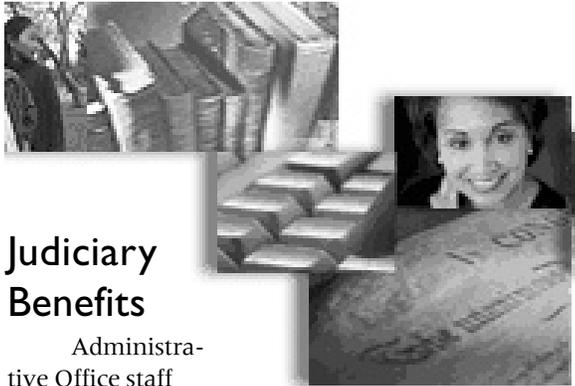
One important communications goal of the Administrative Office is increased public understanding of the federal Judiciary. This year, 4,500 high school students took part in a Judiciary-sponsored program,

In the 2001 Open Doors of Justice program, high school students at the District Court for the District of Columbia participated enthusiastically as judges, attorneys, marshals, courtroom deputies and jurors. Judges and members of the local bar were on hand to guide students through the program activities. The event was part of the federal Judiciary’s national outreach initiative on the role of the federal courts. The Open Doors theme comes from a statement by Chief Justice John Jay, who once described the work of the federal Judiciary as “carrying justice to every man’s door.”

Open Doors of Justice: The Bill of Rights in Your Life.

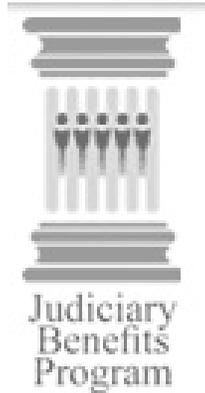
This multi-faceted program brought judges, community leaders, high school teachers, and students together at courthouse sites to participate in a program featuring a moot court simulation, which recreated a real-life case decided by the Supreme Court, broadcast nationwide on the

Federal Judicial Television Network. After the simulation, host judges and volunteer attorneys discussed the case with students at each courthouse.



Judiciary Benefits

Administrative Office staff develop benefits programs for judges and Judiciary employees; administer personnel, payroll, retirement, and insurance programs; and explain new benefits or changes to existing programs. Over the past two years the Judiciary has introduced a number of highly successful supplemental employee benefits. Such options as medical spending reimbursement accounts, long-term care insurance, and public transportation subsidies are among the Judiciary's efforts to attract and retain a high-quality workforce.



Flexible Benefits

Flexible benefits give judges and Judiciary employees the ability to pay for certain health-care and dependent-care expenses on a pre-tax basis. The second annual open enrollment for flexible benefits was held early in fiscal year 2001. Employee participation increased to 27 percent of the workforce during the second year.

Judges and Judiciary employees increased their take home pay by \$22.3 million in 2001.

Also, beginning January 1, 2002, the maximum election amount for health care reimbursement accounts was increased from \$5,000 to \$10,000 per year. Director Mecham offered the

increased election amount as a result of requests from many judges and court employees.

Long-Term Care Insurance

A second open season for purchasing long-term care insurance was held in spring 2001. The participation rate for this program is nearly 16 percent of the total Judiciary population, a rate considerably higher than the industry average for employer-sponsored long-term care programs. A unique feature of the Judiciary's program is that it guarantees coverage for current judges and judicial employees.

Commuter Benefits

The Administrative Office introduced commuter benefits to the Judiciary in early 2001. Now judges and employees can pay for certain commuter mass transit and parking costs on a pre-tax basis up to \$65 a month for transit services and \$175 for parking.

Professional Liability Insurance

Last year, the amount that judges can be reimbursed for purchasing professional liability insurance was set at one-half the premium cost, regardless of the amount. Previously reimbursement had been limited to one-half of the annual policy cost or \$150 per year, whichever was less. In March 2001, the cap of \$150 was lifted for other groups of court officials as well.

Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance

In 1999, the Office of Personnel Management determined that a restructuring of the group life insurance premium rate schedule was necessary because of a new law that vastly expanded the number of federal employees eligible to continue coverage after retirement. If OPM's proposed new rate schedule had gone into effect, Article III judges 65 years of age or older would have been required to pay substantially more for the same life insurance benefits they had in effect on April 30, 1999.

The Administrative Office mobilized every available resource to fight OPM's action, and OPM agreed to hold in abeyance for at least two years (until April 24, 2001) the planned FEGLI rate increases for judges. OPM stated that it would continue to hold the rate increase in abeyance until at least the end of calendar year 2001.

The Administrative Office was successful in getting legislation passed that will allow the Director, in accordance with Judicial Conference policy, to pay on