

One protégé wrote: “[My mentor] continually introduced me to value-delivery concepts applied in the workplace. This has prompted me to analyze how I can further develop existing transferable skills or acquire new ones to provide said value. She has highlighted the importance of virtues like patience in career development.”

The Court Mentoring Program’s first year has proven valuable to the protégés, mentors, and to the court, resulting in a continuing commitment to enhancing professionalism.

Goal 5: Improving Communications and Community Participation

Justice 2035 Strategic Planning Forum Coconino County Courts and Stakeholders

All levels of courts within Coconino County participated in the Justice 2035 Strategic Planning Forum involving 129 stakeholders. Modeled after three prior strategic planning sessions, the Justice 2035 Forum was convened to identify, plan, and prioritize focus areas for the next 20 years.

Attendees included faith-based leaders, public members, social service organizations, educators, law enforcement, judges, tribal leaders, the Board of Supervisors, City Council members, attorneys, and government staff. Participants discussed five strategic focus areas:

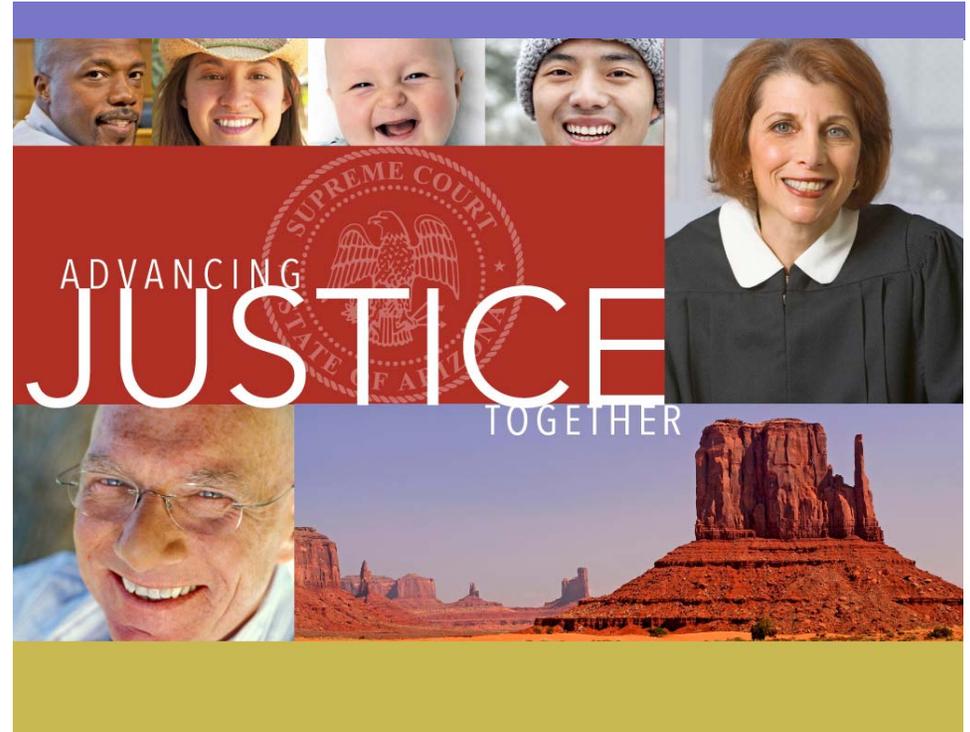
- ◆ Access to Justice and Quality Services
- ◆ Fair and Timely Resolution and Efficient Operations
- ◆ Strong Relations and Partnerships
- ◆ A Professional, Competent, and Engaged Workforce
- ◆ Court Infrastructure

Focused and inclusive strategic planning advances justice by improving communication and community participation.

Learn more about this year’s nominees. Many inspiring, innovative programs or projects are featured at www.azcourts.gov/awards.

Special Thanks to the Judicial Branch Strategic Agenda Awards Committee members who carefully evaluated each award entry before selecting these winners. This is a subcommittee of the Arizona Judicial Council. Committee members include:

- ◆ *Chairman Gary Krcmarik, Court Administrator at Superior Court in Coconino County*
- ◆ *Presiding Judge Janet Barton, Superior Court in Maricopa County*
- ◆ *Chief Judge Peter Eckerstrom, Arizona Court of Appeals, Division II*
- ◆ *Judge Rachel Torres Carrillo, West McDowell Justice of the Peace Court*
- ◆ *Presiding Judge Louis Frank Dominguez, Surprise City Court*
- ◆ *Athia Hardt, Public Member, Arizona Judicial Council*
- ◆ *Victor Flores, Public Member, Arizona Judicial Council*



2016 Strategic Agenda Awards

Presented
Wednesday, October 26, 2016

Little America Hotel
2515 East Butler Avenue
Flagstaff, AZ 86004

Strategic Agenda Awards Luncheon 2016

Welcome

Chief Justice Scott
Bales

Special Recognition of Senators Adam Driggs and Steve Pierce

Chief Justice Scott
Bales

Appreciation to Awards Committee Members

Chief Justice Scott
Bales

Strategic Agenda Awards

Presented by
Awards Committee
Chairman
Gary Krcmarik and
Judge Louis Frank
Dominguez

Goal 1: Promoting Access to Justice

AmeriCorps Program at Maricopa County Superior Court

This new grant-funded program supports access to justice by assisting more than 170,000 self-represented litigants each year. The 2015 grant award allowed the Court to recruit 34 ASU students through AmeriCorps to assist and triage the self-represented who visit court. Within the Self-Service and Protective Order Centers, AmeriCorps members greet visitors, assist them in understanding and completing forms, help them sign up for workshops, escort them to the Clerk's filing counter, or escort them to courtrooms.

Domestic violence victims seeking orders of protection can have a member of the team sit with them until the hearing is over. Members also provide domestic violence victims with information and materials about community resources or programs that can keep them safe.

- ◆ Services are provided in multiple languages.
- ◆ Self-service wait times were reduced from 15 minutes to 4.5 minutes. In the Protective Order Center, this program helped completely eliminate wait times, which had averaged 5 minutes.
- ◆ Since January 2016, the Court's 34 AmeriCorps members served 12,122 hours, assisted 68,096 customers, escorted 1,636 customers, and distributed 2,127 domestic violence resource handouts.

The program is a positive influence on the public but has also helped shape and transform the lives of the AmeriCorps members as well. One member said "My interpersonal skills grew because of it, and I was glad to be able to make a difference. I am honored to be an AmeriCorps member, and I know I have made a difference by helping self-represented litigants get the help they need."

Goal 2: Protecting Children, Families, and Communities

Runaway Handbook developed by Dale Herren & Terra Sears Mohave County Probation Department

Working as Intake Officers with Mohave County's Juvenile Court Services program, Dale Herren and Terra Sears found a need and created a solution that protects children, families, and communities. The adoption of the Kids at Hope approach, the advent of the Crossover Youth Practice Model, and increased awareness of human trafficking inspired Dale and Terra to change the way the department responds to referrals for runaway youth.

Before these recent changes, parents of runaway youth would receive a warning letter by mail. Today, with the Kids at Hope program in place, the department requires a meeting between an Intake Officer and the parent and youth.

Acknowledging that runaway youth are at greater risk for human trafficking, decreased self-esteem, and alienation from their families, the handbook is a step toward preventing these undesirable outcomes. The handbook offers tips on successful family communication, helping youth identify their Kids at Hope Aces, developing their talents, and building life skills. The handbook closes with a collection of resources for additional help or intervention.

Goal 3: Improving Court Processes to Better Serve the Public

Teen Court & Other Reforms Guadalupe Municipal Court

The Guadalupe Municipal Court recently introduced a series of reforms and new processes or programs to better serve the public. Two years ago, Judge Lilia Alvarez became Presiding Judge of the Guadalupe Municipal Court and set the court on a pathway to improvement.

- ◆ The Teen Court received recognition by the National Association of Counties (NACo). It is Arizona's only Teen Court that meets in a library setting with a judge as its leader.
- ◆ Previously, only about 15 percent of defendants appeared, now the appearance rate is above 95 percent.
- ◆ Most people appearing in court are self-represented and lack proficiency in English. Guadalupe Municipal Court now offers an on-line interpreter service.
- ◆ The poverty rate in Guadalupe is twice the state average, but there was no Public Defender to represent the poor. The Court now has a Public Defender.
- ◆ Two years ago, if defendants could not pay court-ordered fines, they were locked up. The Sheriff billed Guadalupe \$219,298 for jail costs in 2013-14. By 2015-16, those costs were reduced to \$36,808 after the court stopped issuing failure-to-pay warrants. Defendants now have the opportunity to create payment plans that are reasonable to the individual's ability to pay. Community restitution in lieu of fines is another option for certain cases.

Goal 4: Enhancing Professionalism within Arizona's Courts

Court Mentoring Program Superior Court in Pima County

The Superior Court in Pima County demonstrated its commitment to enhancing professionalism within Arizona's courts with the creation of the Court Mentoring Program in May 2015. The year-long program builds upon the Superior Court's existing training and education for employees and leaders by adding firsthand advice and counseling from senior leaders.

The mentoring program pairs ten protégés with ten mentors who share their knowledge, experience, insight, and guidance to develop the next generation of high-performing leaders. The ongoing objective is to assist in the recruitment and retention of a high-quality, diverse workforce, ensuring that the Superior Court in Pima County is a desirable place to shape a career.