

2017 Annual Report



**Oakland County
Sixth Judicial Circuit Court
Oakland County Probate Court**



Sixth Judicial Circuit Court and Oakland County Probate Court

**1200 North Telegraph Road
Pontiac, MI 48341
248-858-1000 Circuit Court
248-858-0260 Probate Court**

To learn more about the Sixth Judicial Circuit Court and the
Oakland County Probate Court, please visit their websites at:

www.oakgov.com/courts/circuit

www.oakgov.com/courts/probate

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Message from the Chief Judges



Hon. Shalina D. Kumar
Chief Judge of the
Circuit Court



Hon. Kathleen A. Ryan
Chief Judge of the
Probate Court

Elected Officials and Citizens of Oakland County:

We are pleased to present the 2017 Annual Report for the Circuit and Probate Courts. Annual reports serve several purposes. This report provides information about the courts and how they operate. It highlights our achievements and describes our quest for continued improvement. It provides information to help the reader better understand the judicial system and how to navigate through the courts so that the user finds the judicial system increasingly accessible and convenient.

The purposes just described are focused on the user of the courts. As judges and employees, we derive a benefit from these reports too because they serve as mile-markers, so to speak, reminding us where we were and showing us where we are headed. Most importantly, annual reports serve as apt reminders of our foundational mission – to ensure the fair and impartial administration of justice – and to enable reflection and introspection on how well we performed in carrying out that mission.

We would not be able to realize these accomplishments if not for the expertise, hard work and dedication of our judges and employees. The challenges faced by large, high-volume courts are often complex with far-reaching consequences, yet time and time again our colleagues and employees seize the challenges and turn them into opportunities for innovation and improvement. We offer our thanks to the judges and employees who made these accomplishments possible. And we renew our commitment and resolve to be true to our mission and to do all that can be done to advance the administration of justice here in Oakland County.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shalina Kumar".

Shalina D. Kumar
Chief Judge of the
Circuit Court

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen A. Ryan".

Kathleen A. Ryan
Chief Judge of the
Probate Court

Historical Roster of the Courts

Sixth Judicial Circuit Judges

Sanford M. Green	1848–1852	William R. Beasley	1966–1976	Denise Langford Morris	1992–Present
Joseph Copeland	1852–1858	Farrell E. Roberts	1967–1982	John J. McDonald	1993–2010
Sanford M. Green	1858–1870	Daniel C. Devine	1966–1966	Nanci J. Grant	1997–Present
James S. Dewey	1870–1874	Robert L. Templin	1967–1996	Joan E. Young	1997–2016
Levi B. Taft	1873–1876	William P. Hampton	1970–1976	Wendy L. Potts	1998–Present
Aug C. Baldwin	1876–1880	Richard D. Kuhn	1973–2004	Colleen A. O'Brien	1998–2015
Silas B. Gaskill	1880–1882	John N. O'Brien	1973–1993	Patrick J. Brennan	2001–2004
William Stickney	1882–1888	Robert B. Webster	1973–1982	Rae Lee Chabot	2001–Present
Joseph B. Moore	1888–1896	Steven N. Andrews	1976–2008	James M. Alexander	2001–Present
George W. Smith	1896–1917	Alice L. Gilbert	1978–1992	Michael Warren	2002–Present
Kleber P. Rockwell	1916–1921	Alice L. Gilbert	1995–2002	Daniel P. O'Brien	2003–Present
Frank L. Covert	1919–1933	Francis X. O'Brien	1977–1997	Martha D. Anderson	2003–Present
Glenn C. Gillespie	1922–1934	Hilda R. Gage	1978–1996	Mark A. Goldsmith	2004–2010
Frank L. Doty	1927–1960	Bernard L. Kaufman	1979–1979	Cheryl A. Matthews	2005–Present
Goodloe H. Rogers	1935–1935	Gene Schnelz	1979–2007	Leo Bowman	2007–Present
George B. Hartrick	1935–1958	George LaPlata	1979–1985	Shalina D. Kumar	2007–Present
H. Russel Holland	1935–1963	Robert C. Anderson	1981–1998	Lisa Gorcyca	2009–Present
Clark J. Adams	1956–1973	David F. Breck	1981–2000	Mary Ellen Brennan	2009–Present
William J. Beer	1958–1980	Fred M. Mester	1982–2008	Phyllis C. McMillen	2010–Present
Theodore Hughes	1959–1959	Norman L. Lippitt	1985–1989	Karen McDonald	2013–Present
Stanton G. Dondero	1959–1965	Jessica R. Cooper	1987–2000	Lisa Langton	2015–Present
Frederick C. Ziem	1959–1986	Edward Sosnick	1989–2012	Hala Jarbou	2015–Present
Arthur E. Moore	1963–1976	Barry L. Howard	1989–2001	Jeffery S. Matis	2015–Present
Philip Pratt	1963–1970	Deborah G. Tyner	1991–2006	Victoria A. Valentine	2017–Present
James S. Thorburn	1963–1988	Rudy J. Nichols	1991–2015		

Oakland County Probate Judges

Dr. William Thompson	1821–1823	Junius Ten Eyck	1872–1873	Eugene A. Moore	1967–2010
Nathaniel Millerd	1823–1826	Joseph C. Powell	1873–1876	John J. O'Brien	1975–1988
Smith Weeks	1826–1827	James A. Jacokes	1877–1880	Barry M. Grant	1977–2008
Gideon O. Whittemore	1827–1828	Joseph C. Powell	1881–1884	Sandra G. Silver	1988–2000
Williams F. Mosely	1828	Thomas L. Patterson	1885–1900	Joan E. Young	1989–1997
Ogden Clarke	1828–1832	Joseph S. Stockwell	1901–1909	Wendy L. Potts	1997–1997
Stephen Reeves	1832–1844	Kleber P. Rockwell	1909–1917	Linda S. Hallmark	1998–Present
M. LaMont Bagg	1845–1848	Ross Stockwell	1917–1928	Elizabeth Pezzetti	2001–2016
Michael E. Crofoot	1849–1856	Dan A. McGaffey	1928–1937	Daniel A. O'Brien	2009–Present
Oscar F. North	1857–1861	James H. Lynch	1937–1938	Kathleen A. Ryan	2011–Present
Harry C. Andrews	1861–1863	Arthur E. Moore	1938–1963	Jennifer Callaghan	2017–Present
Zephaniah B. Knight	1863–1868	Donald E. Adams	1960–1977		
Alfred Crawford	1869–1872	Norman R. Barnard	1963–1988		

Judges of the Sixth Judicial Circuit Court

2017 CIRCUIT COURT BENCH



Front row (left to right): *Judges Michael Warren (Presiding Judge of the Civil/Criminal Division), Rae Lee Chabot, Nanci Grant (Chief Judge of the Circuit Court), Denise Langford Morris, Wendy Potts, and James M. Alexander*

Middle row: *Judges Phyllis C. McMillen, Lisa Langton, Karen McDonald, Victoria A. Valentine, Martha D. Anderson, Hala Jarbou, and Cheryl A. Matthews (Chief Judge Pro Tem of the Circuit Court)*

Back row: *Judges Daniel Patrick O'Brien, Mary Ellen Brennan, Leo Bowman, Lisa Gorcyca (Presiding Judge of the Family Division), Jeffery S. Matis, and Shalina D. Kumar*

Judges of the Oakland County Probate Court

2017 PROBATE COURT BENCH



Front row (left to right): *Judges Linda S. Hallmark (Chief Judge of the Probate Court) and Kathleen Ryan (Chief Judge Pro Tem of the Probate Court)*

Back row: *Judges Daniel A. O'Brien and Jennifer Callaghan*

Judicial Investitures



Hon. Victoria A. Valentine
Circuit Court Judge

Judge Victoria A. Valentine was sworn in as the 72nd judge of the Circuit Court and held her investiture very fittingly on Valentine's Day. She was surrounded by a host of judges, attorneys, family, friends, and supporters who witnessed her friend and mentor, the Honorable Amy P. Hathaway, retired Wayne County Circuit Judge, officially swear her in.

Prior to Judge Valentine's election to the bench, she was a partner at Valentine & Associates, P.C., and had been practicing law for 17 years. She was also president-elect of the Oakland County Bar Association and a Trustee of the Oakland County Bar Association.

Judge Valentine took over the family division docket of retired Oakland County Circuit Judge Joan E. Young and presides over domestic cases, delinquency and neglect petitions, adoptions, and personal protection orders.



Hon. Jennifer Callaghan
Probate Court Judge

Judge Jennifer Callaghan was elected to the Oakland County Probate Court in November 2016 and became the 36th Probate Court Judge. At her investiture, Judge Callaghan was surrounded by a large contingency of family, friends, and supporters, as well as a host of judges and dignitaries from around the state. Circuit Judge Wendy Potts, a long-time friend and mentor of Judge Callaghan's, officially administered the oath.

Judge Callaghan served as a Public Administrator for two years before joining the probate bench. She was previously in private practice with John Yun, PC, and Callaghan, PLC. Upon graduation from Wayne State Law School, she became an Assistant Attorney General for the Michigan Department of Attorney General. Judge Callaghan filled the vacancy created upon the retirement of the Honorable Elizabeth Pezzetti.



Circuit Court Administration

Headed by Circuit Court Administrator Kevin Oeffner and Deputy Court Administrator David Bilson, Circuit Court Administration is the office that keeps all the plates spinning. The Circuit Court Administrator serves as the chief executive officer for the circuit court; oversees the operations of the Friend of the Court, the Criminal Assignment System, and the Jury Office; and acts as liaison to local and state government offices and other courts.

Each year brings new challenges to providing efficient court services. The following are a few highlights of Court Administration during 2017:



Kevin Oeffner
Circuit Court Administrator

Visiting Judges

In 2017 Court Administration welcomed retired Dearborn District Court Judge William Hultgren and retired Southfield District Court Judge William Richards who began jointly presiding as Visiting Judges over a newly created Non-Domestic Personal Protection Order docket. Brett Dery, Supervisor - Clerk Support, and Megan Koss, Court Clerk Coordinator, developed the administrative protocol and provide ongoing staffing support for the operation of this Visiting Judge Court.



David Bilson
Deputy Court Administrator

Courthouse Construction

This was a year of landscape architecture security upgrades, from the creation of a safety berm around the courthouse to the installation of new parking systems for employees and more. The project will continue through 2018 when ornamental landscaping features will be added to complete the design.



COURT ADMINISTRATION (continued)

International Goodwill

Court Administration had the opportunity to host Judges Toshihiko Fujii and Yasuhisa Kurachi from the Supreme Court of Japan during May of 2017. The visiting Japanese judges observed criminal trials and met with members of the Oakland Circuit bench to discuss similarities between the court systems.

Courthouse Security

The Oakland County Sheriff's Office does excellent work in keeping the courthouse employees and the general public safe. In 2017, the first floor and ground floor security entrances were completely overhauled to enhance security efforts in the courthouse. The Sheriff's Office reported the following statistics for 2017:

- *More than 590,000 people were screened upon entry into the courthouse*
- *A total of 4,036 weapons were intercepted and/or seized from persons entering the courthouse: 3,831 were edged weapons such as long knives, a dagger, and pocket knives; 203 were mace or pepper spray containers; and two were handguns*



Court Administration staff includes (left to right): Brett Dery, Supervisor—Clerk Support; Chari Christie, Executive Secretary; Meg Koss, Court Clerk Coordinator; and Katherine Siebenaler, Court Business Analyst.

Circuit Court— Civil/Criminal Division

Judge Phyllis C. McMillen presides over the civil/criminal bench and assists Chief Judge Shalina Kumar in providing leadership goals and directives for matters affecting the civil/criminal bench. Judge McMillen succeeds Judge Michael Warren who served as Presiding Judge from 2016 through 2017.

The Civil/Criminal Division is composed of 13 judges who hear civil cases with alleged damages over \$25,000, criminal cases involving felonies or high misdemeanors, and appeals from the 14 district courts, as well as judicial oversight and administrative support for four specialty courts within the Civil/Criminal Division.

Pamela Monville, manager of the division, coordinates administrative support and information to assist in implementing goals identified by the civil/criminal bench, to update staff on changes in the laws promulgated by the governor and legislature, and to follow procedures established by the State Court Administrative Office. The Civil/Criminal Division Manager also oversees the Case Management Office, Jury Office, and Urban Drug Court, and provides administrative support regarding access to court records and transcripts, foreign language interpreters, ADA accommodations, court reimbursement issues, and case evaluation show cause hearings.

Resentencing of Juvenile Lifers—An Update

In 2016 the U.S. Supreme Court decided that juvenile offenders who had committed murder and are serving life sentences without parole are entitled to resentencing. Of the 50 cases eligible for resentencing at Oakland County Circuit Court, four were resentenced in 2017. Another three cases are currently on appeal, and 29 cases have been stayed pending the outcome of a related matter presently before the Michigan Supreme Court. Resentencing has not yet begun on the remaining 14 cases.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Two judicial staff attorneys assist the 13 Civil/Criminal Division judges with legal and administrative matters. The judicial staff attorneys provide support to chamber staff attorneys in drafting proposed opinions on complex appeals and criminal appellate motions. In addition, support staff provide assistance to chambers when a staff attorney is out on extended leave.



Hon. Phyllis C. McMillen
Presiding Judge of the
Civil/Criminal Division

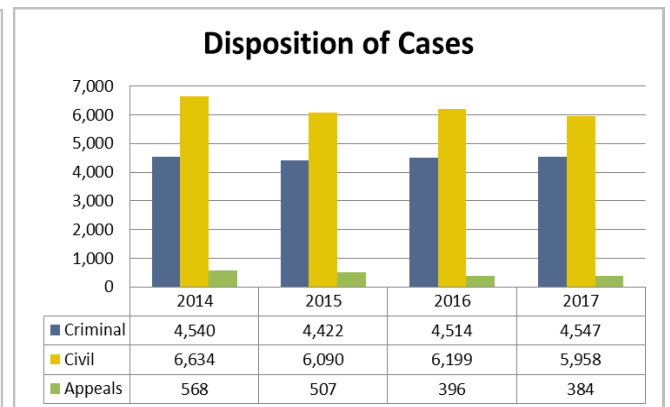
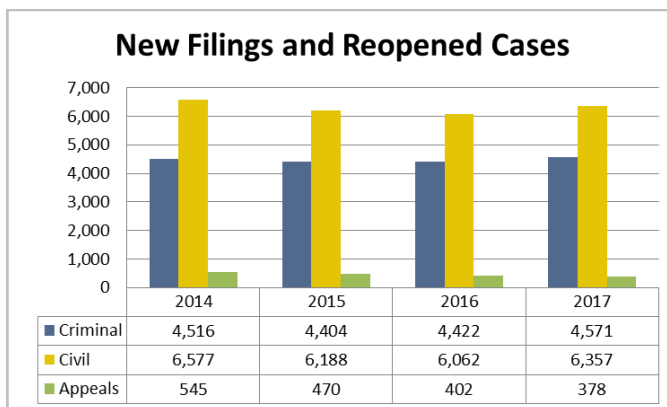


Pamela Monville
Manager-Civil/Criminal
Division/Judicial Assistant

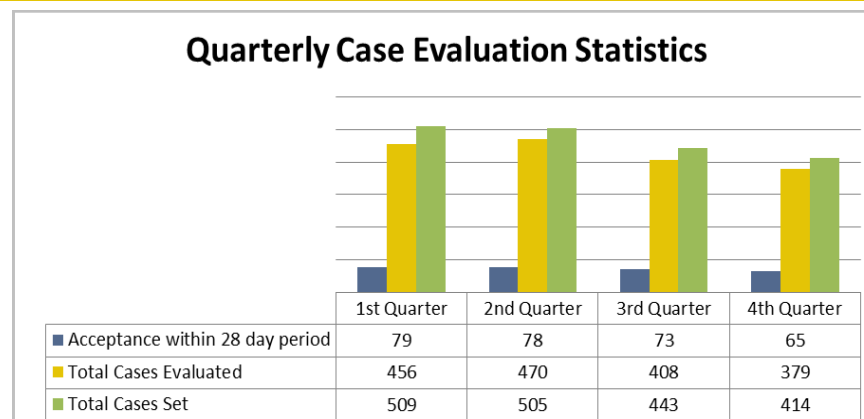
CASE MANAGEMENT OFFICE

Headed by Gwynne Starkey and supervised by Michelle Kase, the Case Management Office is the hub for caseload and has 11 specialized support staff to administer the daily case operations for civil, criminal, and probate dockets, including specialized programs such as case evaluation and Judge On-Line.

The Civil Case Support area maintains statistics and is responsible for assigning, reassigning, and consolidating cases; processing Judge On-Line requests; managing praecipes; preparing and distributing scheduling orders; logging and directing mail; and adjusting docket entries. The Criminal Case Support area is responsible for assigning criminal cases; is involved with appointing trial counsel; and compiles information used for pre-sentence investigations. Staff also track and maintain criminal assignment data and monitor the daily inmate population.



- *Processed 4,247 bindovers from the district courts*
- *Appointed appellate counsel for criminal defendants in 290 cases*
- *Prepared preliminary background information for 4,261 pre-sentence investigation reports*
- *Scheduled 1,871 cases for case evaluation*
- *Overall acceptance rate for case evaluation was 17%*
- *402 no-fault cases were referred to case evaluation with a 19% acceptance rate*
- *Processed 584 requests for individuals to participate in hearings through the Judge On-Line program*
- *Processed 103 case evaluation show cause orders*
- *Sought case evaluation show cause judgments on 13 cases totaling \$3,775*
- *Processed 3,811 petitions at the trial level for court-appointed attorneys*



JURY OFFICE

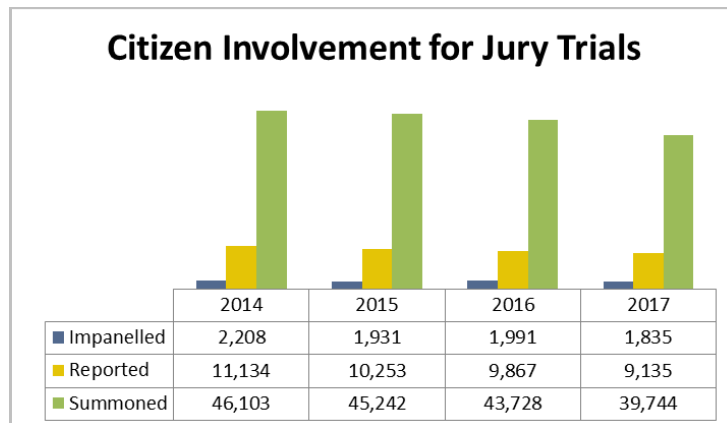
Under the supervision of Deborah Fahr, the Jury Office tracks juror utilization rates to ensure a sufficient number of jurors are available for trials while imposing the least hardship on those summoned for jury service. All persons not legally excused from jury service, regardless of status or occupation, are expected to serve when summoned. More information about jury service can be found at: <https://www.oakgov.com/courts/circuit/departments/jury-office>.

In the fall of 2017, the courts implemented a new jury management system. The system randomly selects names generated from the Secretary of State’s repository of Oakland County residents who are 18 years of age or older and possess either a driver’s license or a state identification card.

Jurors who are summoned for jury service have the option to complete the juror qualification questionnaire online. This feature allows jurors to update personal information and email addresses to allow for electronic notices. One-page paper questionnaires are also available for those who prefer the traditional method. The single sheet of paper serves as a summons, questionnaire, and return envelope all in one. This saves the court and taxpayers the expense of providing a separate return envelope and additional sheets of paper.

This new system allows jurors to check their status online or they may also call in to an updated interactive voice-response system which provides juror service status, reporting instructions, directions, or the temporary deferral of jury service. Jurors who provide email addresses or sign up for text alerts will receive electronic notices when juror reporting time has changed, saving valuable time.

- *Summoned 39,744 prospective jurors, of which 9,135 were required to report for service, and ultimately 1,835 were selected to sit as jurors*
- *In 2017, there were 68 civil trials and 102 criminal trials, including 36 capital cases, of which 11 were murder/homicide*
- *Jurors served for an average of 3.15 days for civil trials and an average of 2.63 days for criminal trials*
- *Average cost per jury trial was \$2,003.20*
- *Total paid to jurors in 2017 was \$340,543, including juror fees and mileage*



BUSINESS COURT

Business Courts were established by the Legislature in 2013 (MCL 600.8031 *et seq.*). The Supreme Court appointed Judges Wendy Potts and James Alexander to serve on the Oakland County Business Court. The statutory purpose is to establish best practices for the resolution of business disputes; improve efficiency; utilize the latest technology in managing Business Court cases; and enhance the accuracy, consistency, and predictability of decisions in business and commercial cases. The Oakland County Business Court is the busiest Business Court in Michigan and one of the busiest in the United States.

- *Business Court had 924 new filings in 2017*
- *1,002 business cases were disposed and 43 were put on inactive status*
- *Business Court statutes were amended in July 2017 and the amendments went into effect on October 11, 2017*

ADULT TREATMENT COURT

Under the supervision of Jackie Howes-Evanson, the Adult Treatment Court (ATC) is in its 17th year of helping participants who have serious substance abuse problems and have committed non-violent felonies within Oakland County. Judges Hala Jarbou and Shalina Kumar preside over the Oakland County Adult Treatment Court (ATC).

In 2017, the ATC underwent significant changes to better align with evidence-based practices. The program expanded its eligibility criteria in response to the amendments to MCLA 600.1060(g) that updated the definition of a violent offender. Additionally, to keep up with best practices, a participant must score moderate to high overall risk and moderate to high need on the Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions (COMPAS) test.

With the expansion of this criteria and discontinuation of the Urban Drug Court, the ATC now has three MDOC probation agents to handle the increase in population. Also, ATC has fully incorporated the use of Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) for its participants, partnering with Oakland Community Health Network/ACCESS to facilitate this process.

- *79 participants in the program: 59 males and 20 females*
- *47 individuals had co-occurring disorders and were in the Mental Health Track of the program*
- *752 participants have been admitted to the program since its inception in August of 2001*
- *244 participants have graduated from the program*
- *96% of the graduates were employed full time at discharge*
- *Average number of days to complete the program is 515 days, or 17 months*
- *Although most graduates enter the program with either a high school diploma or GED, 15% improve their education level while in the program*
- *Two probation officers were trained in administering Naloxone, an emergency treatment for a known or suspected opioid overdose*



Adult Treatment Court team (left to right): Karen Peterson, Oakland County Community Corrections; Rachel Jarnagin, MDOC Probation Officer; Callie Moss, MDOC Probation Officer; Jack Holmes, ATC Defense Attorney; Honorable Hala Jarbou; Honorable Shalina Kumar; Ken Briggs, Community Programs Inc.; Jackie Howes-Evanson, Drug Treatment Court Supervisor; James Frankel, Solutions to Recovery; and Michelle Crenshaw, ATC Intern. Not pictured: Ahmed Bazzi, MDOC Probation Officer

URBAN DRUG COURT

The Oakland County Urban Drug Court was established in 2013 as one of four pilot projects in the State of Michigan targeting the urban areas of Pontiac, Detroit, Flint, and Saginaw. In 2017, the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) advised Oakland, Wayne, Genesee, and Saginaw Counties that the Urban Drug Courts Initiative Pilot Project was complete. Grants would no longer be issued for urban drug courts which targeted specific cities. Rather, funding would be available to accommodate certain high-risk participants who participated in the counties' Adult Treatment Courts.

As a result of this change in funding, the Urban Drug Court officially dissolved in September 2017. The participants in the program were given the option to transfer supervision to the Adult Treatment Court (ATC) or terminate their involvement in the program.

COMBAT VETERANS TREATMENT COURT

The Combat Veterans Treatment Court (CVTC) at Oakland Circuit is the State's only Combat Veterans Treatment Court and is operating in its fifth year. Judge Nanci Grant presides over this specialty court. The CVTC was created as a way to help combat veterans who literally placed themselves in harm's way to protect our freedoms.

The goal of the court is to reach Oakland County combat veterans who have been charged with offenses related to traumatic experiences suffered in combat, conflict, search and rescue operations, or recovery missions while serving our country. This program does not seek to give participants special treatment, but focuses on the unique issues faced by our veterans.

- *The Combat Veterans Treatment Court currently has 11 participants, with two defendants under consideration for admission into the program*
- *In 2017, three veterans graduated from the treatment court*
- *Since its inception, seven veterans have successfully completed the program*



The Combat Veterans Treatment Court celebrated its second graduation in April of this year. Surrounding the graduate above is Presiding Judge Nanci Grant and the support staff of the program.

Circuit Court— Family Division

Judge Jeffery S. Matis, Presiding Judge of the Family Division, is responsible for managing this division. Judge Matis succeeds Judge Lisa Gorcyca who served as Presiding Judge from 2014 through 2017. The Family Division is composed of six Circuit Court judges who hear domestic relations cases involving divorce, child support, and paternity matters. Judges in this division also finalize adoptions; handle name changes and juvenile guardianships; preside over hearings for juvenile offenses, delinquencies, and child abuse and neglect cases; and oversee Personal Protection Orders.



*Hon. Jeffery S. Matis
Presiding Judge of the
Family Division*

FRIEND OF THE COURT

Administered by Friend of the Court Suzanne Hollyer, this office is responsible for investigating and enforcing issues involving custody, support, and parenting time on the court's domestic relations caseload. The Family Division judges are assisted by 19 Friend of the Court referees who hold hearings to enforce and modify Family Division orders regarding support, custody, and parenting time, and hold early intervention conferences to help divorcing clients understand the process. Also assisting the Family Division judges are 18 family counselors who provide the SMILE (Start Making It Livable for Everyone) program to help parents understand the impact of divorce on their children. More information about the FOC can be found at: www.oakgov.com/courts/foc.



*Suzanne Hollyer
Friend of the Court*

Co-Parenting Effectively (COPE)

In 2017, the Friend of the Court developed a free five-hour post-judgment skills-based class for co-parents who are struggling to work together in parenting their children from separate households. Called COPE (Co-Parenting Effectively), it is held at the Friend of the Court offices.

Parents attend separate sessions where they explore tools that will assist in coping with the stress and frustration associated with co-parenting with someone they see as difficult or uncooperative. Parents also learn communication strategies to reduce conflict. Contact the Friend of the Court Custody and Parenting Time Specialist to determine if a referral is appropriate for a particular case.

Laserfiche Run Smarter Award

Oakland County Friend of the Court was recognized with the Laserfiche Run Smarter Award for its use of technology to improve access to services. Laserfiche honors organizations that demonstrate

FRIEND OF THE COURT (continued)

excellence in innovative approaches to managing content and automating processes to drive business value. With this new technology, the public may now submit forms electronically using any browser and on any device. Forms identified as “online forms” can be filled out and submitted with the click of a button, allowing the Friend of the Court to receive requests for service and respond quickly.



The Friend of the Court management team— Front row (left to right): Cima Riza, Pam Sala, Peter Dever, Suzanne Hollyer, Jeanette Miracle-Leshan, Julie Izzo, Andrea Bayer. Back row: Rhonda Mohlman, Evanne Dietz, Carol Shaw, Sarah Bagues, Craig Eaton, ViLisa Hamilton, Mary Kaye Neumann, Tori Petway, Katie Weston, Kate Weaver. (Not pictured: Jim Krebs and Julie Gorman)

- *Over \$190 million in support was distributed through the Friend of the Court in 2017*
- *5,158 investigations and recommendations regarding custody, parenting time, change of domicile or residence, and child support were completed by FOC staff*
- *31,211 hearings were held by FOC referees to enforce custody, parenting time and support*
- *In the first year of the COPE program, 126 referrals were received with 75 individuals completing the program between May and December*

SUMMARY OF DOMESTIC RELATIONS CASE ACTIVITY

New Filing Activity

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>
Domestic Relations				
Without Children	2,345	2,276	2,404	2,267
With Children	2,063	2,078	2,060	1,922
Paternity	910	835	688	584
Interstate	58	57	49	60
Support	1,242	1,152	1,199	943
Other	339	324	336	301
Total New Filings	6,957	6,722	6,736	6,077

JUDICIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Headed by Scott Hamilton, Manager of Judicial Support/Judicial Assistant, this area consists of the Juvenile Court referees, Clinical Services, and Juvenile Support Services, which includes the Juvenile Intake Unit, Juvenile Court Legal Processing Unit, Personal Protection Order Office, and Adoption Unit. In Mr. Hamilton's role as Judicial Assistant, he is also the lead legal advisor for the Family Division.

Scott Hamilton, former Juvenile Court Referee Supervisor, succeeded Bill Bartlam who retired in December marking 33 years with the court. During Mr. Bartlam's tenure, he was instrumental in overseeing many advancements with the court, including representing the court at the presentation of a prestigious award from the National Association of Court Managers for creating the Adoption Permanency Project and Study.



Scott Hamilton
Manager—Judicial
Support Services/Judicial
Assistant

Juvenile Court Referees —

Referee Martin Alvin stepped down from his position as Juvenile Court Referee Supervisor in 2017 and Referee Karla Mallett is now the Juvenile Court Referee Supervisor. The eight Juvenile Court Referees assist the Family Division judges by conducting hearings and making recommendations following the hearings. Referees act as the gatekeeper to Juvenile Court by evaluating each complaint or petition filed and then making the decision whether to grant or deny authorization, divert the matter, or use informal resolution methods.

With the use of iPads™, Juvenile Court Referees represent the court 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and are able to view petitions, record testimony, and complete and sign court orders. Referees are able to immediately act on requests for detention of juveniles and placement of children who are at substantial risk of harm.



Juvenile Court Referees—Front row (left to right): Martin Alvin, Lisa Harris, Twila Leigh, and Karla Mallett. Back row: Scott Hamilton, Mike Hand, David Batdorf-Barnes, and Joe Racey.

JUDICIAL SUPPORT SERVICES (continued)

Clinical Services Unit—

The Clinical Services Unit, also known as the Psychological Clinic, operates under the direction of Melissa Sulfaro-Rodriguez, Psy.D. This unit assists the judges in making informed decisions by providing forensic evaluations of children and families who are involved with the court.

In 2017, the position of Senior Psychologist was converted to Chief of Clinical Services. This marked the first time in more than ten years that the clinic has had a chief.

- *Received 474 referrals for evaluations on delinquency and abuse/neglect cases, including five for competency and/or criminal responsibility*
- *Over 60 subpoenas were received requesting testimony from clinicians*
- *A Peer Review program was created by which clinicians review reports and discuss cases to ensure continued quality in psychological evaluation reports*

JUVENILE SUPPORT SERVICES

Erin O'Brien, Chief of Juvenile Support Services, oversees the Juvenile Intake Unit, Personal Protection Order Office, Adoption Services Unit, and Juvenile Legal Processing Unit. These departments provide essential assistance to the judges of the Family Division as well as the residents of Oakland County.

Juvenile Intake Unit—

Jerri Decker, Juvenile Intake Supervisor, oversees support staff who process all incoming requests for action, perform record checks to identify prior court involvement, and forward documents to the Prosecutor's Office. This area also schedules preliminary hearings, diversion conferences, traffic hearings, and other matters for the four referees assigned to Juvenile Intake.

Juvenile Court Legal Processing Unit—

The Juvenile Court Legal Processing Unit is under the direction of Supervisor Carmen Janik. The support staff, which includes deputy registers, order clerks, typists, and file room assistants, are responsible for preparing files for hearings as well as creating, maintaining, and updating the physical and electronic records for each case. They also oversee the court schedule, confidential juvenile files, transcripts, and exhibits. This area assists the public and parties in cases before the Juvenile Court. They prepare court orders for all hearings heard by referees and distribute court orders after they have been processed by the County Clerk's Office.

Nicole Rude, Attorney Appointment Specialist, maintains a data base of attorneys qualified by education and experience to represent indigent parties who request a court-appointed attorney.

- *In 2017, this unit received 2,788 requests for a court-appointed attorney*

Personal Protection Order Office—

Melissa Hoppe, Personal Protection Order Office Liaison, provides legal expertise in both the issuance and enforcement of Personal Protection Orders. This office assists petitioners in completing the application process and works with Pre-Trial Services, a unit of the Oakland County Community Corrections Division, in developing bond recommendations for incarcerated respondents. Office staff also work with petitioners who have requested show cause orders.

- *A total of 2,309 Personal Protection Orders were filed: 1,561 domestic, 710 non-domestic, and 38 juvenile*

Adoption Services Unit—

The Adoption Services Unit works with the public and adoption agencies to provide oversight and supervision of adoption petitions and post-adoption information requests. The professional and support staff are charged with ensuring that the confidentiality of information is maintained and that the adoption process is handled expeditiously as required by law.

The Adoption Services Unit processes adoption petitions for direct placement, agency, adult, stepparent, and relative adoptions. It also accepts petitions regarding post-adoption matters, including delayed registration of foreign birth and confidential intermediary services. In addition, two permanency coordinators handle a specialized Adoption Permanency Docket and monitor the progress toward adoption permanency for each child. The coordinators also monitor both foster care and adoption caseworker performance to eliminate barriers to a child's adoption.

- *Finalized 162 adoptions in 2017*
- *In November, the Adoption Services Unit hosted the 15th Annual Adoption Day Celebration in Oakland County, celebrating the adoption of seven children with four families*
- *Since the inception of the Annual Adoption Day Celebration in 2003, over 200 children from Oakland County have been adopted with 135 families on this special day*



Judge Lisa Gorcyca presided over the 15th Annual Adoption Day Celebration where seven children were adopted by four families.

SUMMARY OF JUDICIAL COURT ACTIVITY

New Filing Activity

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>
Juvenile/Adoptions				
Delinquency	1,585	1,568	1,614	1,501
Child Protective Proceedings	395	374	431	332
Juvenile Traffic Tickets	49	61	47	49
Adoption Petitions	323	410	291	320
Subtotal	2,352	2,413	2,383	2,202
Personal Protection Orders				
Domestic	1,549	1,674	1,558	1,561
Non-Domestic	696	716	754	710
Juvenile	24	47	36	38
Subtotal	2,269	2,437	2,348	2,309
Miscellaneous Family				
Name Change	482	505	504	509
Other	31	29	30	24
Subtotal	513	534	534	533
Total New Filings	5,134	5,384	5,265	5,044

COURT SERVICES

Court Services encompasses Casework Services, Family-Focused Juvenile Drug Court, and Youth Assistance. Tina Lathers is the Chief of Casework Services and also oversees the Family-Focused Juvenile Drug Court. Tina succeeds Bill Hamilton who retired after a career of 35 years with Oakland County.

Mary Schusterbauer is the Chief of Youth Assistance and oversees the professional staff in the 26 field offices countywide.

Casework Services—

Casework Services is responsible for juvenile probation, including regular and intensive probation with community-based and residential services. It also handles delinquency cases authorized for the court by the Intake Department and assists cases through the adjudication process when necessary. Upon adjudication, the Casework Unit is responsible for making recommendations regarding disposition. During post-disposition, it assists with implementing court orders, including monitoring of probation, restitution, community service, restorative justice, parent education, and counseling.

- *Casework Services opened 764 new cases and closed 844 case files*
- *Court wards completed 7,539 hours of Youth Community Service*
- *Four new Youth and Family caseworkers were hired and trained during 2017*
- *Casework Services continued to expand collaboration with community partners including Children’s Village, Crossroads for Youth, Oakland Schools, and Oakland Community Health Network in order to improve service delivery to those youth who come before the Court for delinquent behavior and their family members*

Family-Focused Juvenile Drug Court—

Judge Mary Ellen Brennan is the Presiding Judge of the Family-Focused Juvenile Drug Court which has been in existence since 2001. The Juvenile Drug Court (JDC) mission is to promote public safety and reduce juvenile drug crime rates by helping substance abusing youthful offenders and their families achieve drug-free lifestyles and healthy family relationships. Jacqueline Howes-Evanson oversees the day-to-day operation of the JDC.

The JDC continued to collaborate with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), who was contracted by SCAO to effectively incorporate the new Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Guidelines. The JDC participated in an extensive NCSC site visit which was followed by a three-day training for the JDC team in November.

The JDC welcomed their newest caseworker, Hillary Adams, to the team. Additionally, after serving as the JDC referee for over 17 years, Juvenile Court Referee Martin Alvin handed over the reins to Referee Lisa Harris. The JDC will be forever grateful to Referee Alvin for his wisdom and leadership.

- *The Juvenile Drug Court had a 49% graduation rate as of 2017*
- *JDC graduates averaged 239 sobriety days at the time of their commencement*
- *Ninety-nine percent of the graduates improved their level of education and 90% had improved their employment status—an increase over 2016*
- *One probation officer was trained in administering Naloxone, an emergency treatment for a known or suspected opioid overdose*

COURT SERVICES (continued)

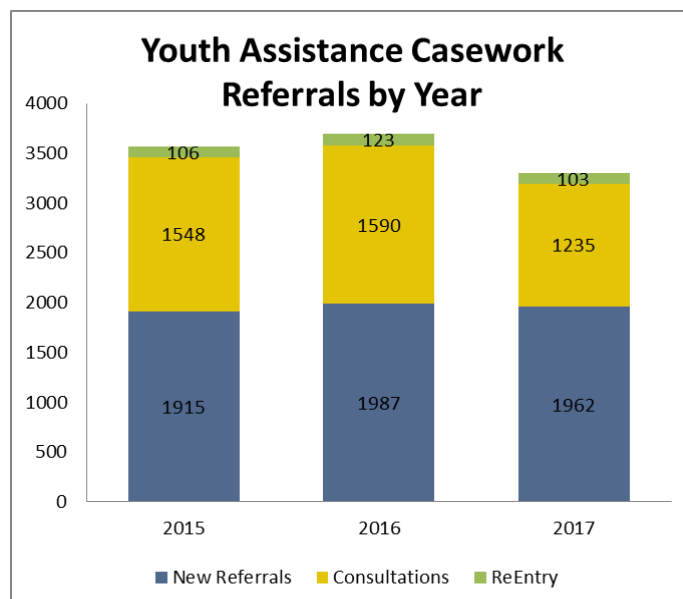
Youth Assistance—

Youth Assistance is the prevention arm of the court's continuum of services and uses a two-pronged approach to strengthen youth and families. Professional staff in 26 field offices countywide provide family-focused casework to at-risk youth referred by police departments, schools, and the Intake Department of the court. Volunteer boards of directors in each community identify needs, raise funds, and plan and implement primary prevention programs. Youth Assistance has a unique tri-sponsorship structure where staff is hired by the court, but each local program is sponsored by the school district and municipalities.

The Oakland County Youth Assistance Coordinating Council was pleased to receive a grant for \$5,000 from the Michigan Masonic Charitable Foundation. Members of the Foundation presented a check to Michael Kazyak, Chair of the Youth Assistance Coordinating Council, and Mary Schusterbauer, Chief of Youth Assistance. These funds will be dedicated to training staff and volunteers to understand implicit bias and how it affects our interactions with others.



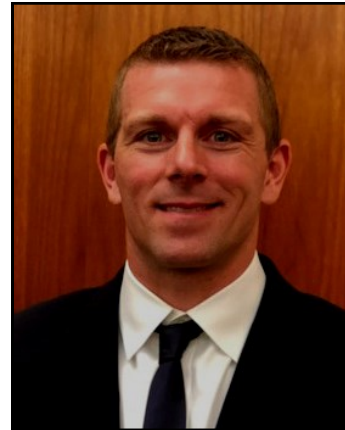
Mary Schusterbauer, Chief of Youth Assistance, and Michael Kazyak, Chair of Youth Assistance Coordinating Council, accept a check presented by The Michigan Masonic Charitable Foundation.



Probate Court Administration

There was a changing of the guards with the Probate Court as Rebecca Schnelz retired after ten years as the Oakland Probate Court Administrator at the end of 2017 and Edward Hutton III became the new Probate Court Administrator.

The Oakland County Probate Court provides essential services to Oakland County's most vulnerable citizens. The Probate Court Administrator works with the Chief Judge regarding operations of the Probate Court and serves as liaison to local and state government offices and other courts.



Edward Hutton III
Probate Court Administrator

Laserfiche Implementation

The Probate Court completed the first major phase for the implementation of Laserfiche, Oakland County's new document management system. Now that the Probate Court business requirements have been finalized, work can begin to design the system architecture and develop the application. Laserfiche will be implemented in late 2018 and will enhance document workflow and access in the Probate Court.

Guardianship/Conservatorship Basic Training

In partnership with the Citizens Alliance for the Oakland County Probate and Circuit Courts, the Probate Court conducts basic training classes for conservators and guardians on a monthly basis at the courthouse. These training classes are conducted by volunteer attorneys and are provided at no charge to the participants. The training provides essential information and tools for handling duties as a conservator and guardian.

Removing the Mysteries of Probate Court Seminars

The Probate Court provides free seminars six to eight times a year titled "Removing the Mysteries of Probate Court" at various locations within Oakland County. This program is designed to educate senior citizens and their families so that they can make informed decisions regarding estate planning and understand the probate process. Over 200 citizens participated in these free seminars in 2017 at centers located in Troy, White Lake, Novi, Birmingham, Royal Oak, and Auburn Hills.

Probate Court Website

The Probate Court provides online brochures containing basic information regarding guardianships, conservatorships, decedent estates, and mental health proceedings. These brochures, as well as the necessary forms, are available on the Oakland County Probate Court website at www.oakgov.com/courts/probate.

Probate Court—Estates and Mental Health



Barbara Andruccioli
Probate Court Register

The Oakland County Probate Court is comprised of four judges: the Honorable Kathleen A. Ryan, Chief Judge; the Honorable Linda S. Hallmark, Chief Judge Pro Tempore; the Honorable Daniel A. O'Brien; and the Honorable Jennifer Callaghan.

Barbara Andruccioli took over the position as Probate Court Register from Jill Koney Daly who retired from the court after 29 years of service. The Probate Court Administrator and the Probate Court Register oversee support staff in distinct probate areas including the Mental Health Unit, Guardianship and Conservatorship Unit, and Estates and Trusts Unit.

The Probate Court also works with the Circuit and Probate Courts' Jury Office to manage probate jury trials, the courts' Case Management Office regarding judicial assignments and case evaluations, and the courts' Business Division in regard to the Probate Court's \$6.4 million budget.

MENTAL HEALTH UNIT

Mental health commitment hearing dockets are held by the Court twice each week. At these hearings, the judge must decide whether the respondent is mentally ill and requires treatment and whether or not hospitalization is the only appropriate treatment. Mental health respondents participate in court hearings by physically appearing in court or through video conferencing.

The Mental Health Unit of the Probate Register's Office manages proceedings under the Mental Health Code. This includes mental health commitment hearings, requests for assisted outpatient treatment (also known as "Kevin's Law"), substance abuse treatment and rehabilitation, and emergency requests for mental health examination and possible hospitalization. This unit facilitates jury trials, arranges for transportation of individuals for judicial hearings, and coordinates appointment of counsel and expert medical witnesses. This unit also processes and schedules all motions in mental health cases and prepares the orders after court hearings.

- *The Mental Health docket accounted for roughly 25% of the Probate Court cases*
- *Although State guidelines require that 90% of the mental health dispositions occur within 14 days, Oakland County Probate Court disposed of over 95% of their cases in that timeframe*

GUARDIANSHIP AND CONSERVATORSHIP UNIT

The Probate Court hears all petitions to initiate, modify, or terminate guardianships and conservatorships for minors and adults, as well as guardianships for developmentally disabled persons. The Court also resolves issues that arise during the pendency of a guardianship or conservatorship and monitors many cases through regular review hearings. Unlike many other cases, conservatorship and guardianship cases often remain open for years.

This unit manages the court filings for the guardianship and conservatorship cases, including processing annual reports of guardians and the annual accounts of conservators. Court staff assigned to this unit also ensure that mandatory reviews of guardianships are performed. Consistent monitoring is required to determine whether fiduciaries have complied with statutory requirements.

- *1,409 reviews were performed by court-appointed reviewers, many of them trained volunteers*
- *15 new volunteer reviewers were trained in 2017*
- *Although State time guidelines require that 75% of guardianship dispositions occur within 90 days, Oakland County Probate Court disposed of 93.5% of their guardianship files within the 90-day timeframe*

ESTATES AND TRUSTS UNIT

The Probate Court resolves issues regarding wills and trusts in the event of uncertainty or conflict and determines the heirs in estates where there is no will. If a conflict is present regarding interpretation of a trust or the disposition of property under the terms of a trust, then the Court resolves the issues. The Court may also render decisions involving conflicts between fiduciaries.

Civil cases involving trust and estate assets are also heard in Probate Court. These cases typically involve claims in which a fiduciary is seeking to preserve or recoup assets.

The Estates and Trusts Unit manages the court filings for estates, trusts, and civil cases. Members of this unit are responsible for the authorization of small estates and *Letters of Authority* for personal representatives in certain situations. Staff assigned to this unit also monitor all active cases on a daily basis to ensure required documentation is filed and timelines are met. This unit issues notices of deficiency and suspensions of fiduciaries when necessary and fields questions on open files.

- *The Probate Court accepted 735 new wills for safekeeping; they join the tens of thousands of wills already held by the Court*
- *The oldest unclaimed will deposited with the court dates back to 1852*
- *Estate and Trust cases comprise about 37% of the Probate Court caseload*
- *The Probate Court disposed of 99.8% of the estate dispositions within a 182-day timeframe, which is 9.8% higher than the state timeframe*
- *2,709 requests were made for court-appointed attorneys for Mental Health, Developmental Disability, Conservatorship, and Guardianship cases*

PROBATE COURT—ESTATES AND MENTAL HEALTH (continued)



In December, the Oakland County Probate Judges and retired Judge Elizabeth Pezzetti said farewell to Probate Court Administrator Rebecca Schnelz who left the court after 16 years with Oakland County, of which ten were in her position as Probate Court Administrator. Pictured above (left to right): Judge Daniel A. O'Brien, Chief Judge Pro Tem Kathleen A. Ryan, Judge Elizabeth Pezzetti (retired), Rebecca Schnelz, Chief Judge Linda S. Hallmark, and Judge Jennifer Callaghan.

SUMMARY OF PROBATE COURT ACTIVITY

New Filings	7,300
Reopened Cases	239
Pending Cases	408
Wills	870
Foreign Births	17

ACTIVE CASE TOTALS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2017

Estates & Trusts Cases	5,285
Adult Guardianships	4,526
Adult Conservatorships	1,430
Minor Guardianships	1,929
Minor Conservatorships	756
Guardianships (Developmentally Disabled)	2,287
Civil and Other Matters	26
Total	16,239

Business Division of the Courts

The Business Division, under the leadership of John Cooperrider, is responsible for the development and delivery of business and administrative support services for the Circuit and Probate Courts. This division is responsible for developing and monitoring the Circuit Court's \$71 million budget and the Probate Court's \$6.4 million budget.



John Cooperrider
Business Division Manager

Chris Bujak, Chief of Court Business Operations, assists in supervising this multifaceted operation. The Business Division is divided into three areas of operation, Administrative/Financial, Data Technology, and Court Resource and Program Support, in order to effectively manage its diverse and complex responsibilities.

2017 included significant changes, transitions, conversions, and large implementation projects in which the Business Division played a leadership role for the courts.

- *Converted from Tyler eFiling system to the new Statewide eFiling system*
- *Converted from Xerox/Congruent jury management system to the new Courthouse Technologies jury management system*
- *Transitioned the Urban Drug Court grant program to the Adult Treatment Court grant program*
- *Transitioned to the updated Child Care Fund (CCF) policies and procedures based on the new CCF Handbook*
- *Worked through Child Care Fund On-Site Review*
- *Reorganized the Word Processing Center/Data Technology Training Room/Business Office*

Grant Funding

The Business Division continued to secure alternative sources of funds for specialty courts, including grants for the Family-Focused Juvenile Drug Court, the Adult Treatment Court, the Adult Mental Health Court, the Urban Drug Court, the Justice Assistance Grant (JAG), and the Court Improvement Program Grant, in an amount just over \$400,000.

Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan

As part of the Facility Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan developed by the County's Homeland Security Department, along with Building Safety, the courts are required to test the plan by holding two different types of drills per year. A fire drill was conducted in the spring of 2017 with the entire courthouse being evacuated, and a bomb threat/suspicious package drill was conducted in the fall.

ADMINISTRATIVE/FINANCIAL UNIT

Cindy Lingle, Supervisor of Administrative Services, oversees six full-time and four part-time employees. This area is responsible for reconciling state ward credit adjustments; processing payments for case-related services, such as court-appointed attorneys, expert witnesses, and interpreters; and working with the Human Resources Department to process court personnel transactions for more than 350 Circuit and Probate Court employees. Four typists work with 24 caseworkers and seven referees to prepare casework and referee reports on all juvenile neglect and delinquency cases. Capital improvements, special projects, supplies, printing requests, work orders, furniture, and equipment requests are also handled by this unit.

Following the retirement of Supervisor Shelley Nelson, the Word Processing Unit was merged into the Administrative/Financial Unit. After occupying an office in the east wing for 30 years, it was moved to the second floor west wing to be more efficient with resources and office space.

- *Processed court personnel transactions for more than 350 Circuit Court and Probate Court employees, including ten retirements and 44 new hires*
- *As a result of the merging of the Word Processing Unit with the Administrative/Financial Unit, this unit now facilitates the ordering and receiving of transcripts in juvenile matters*
- *Transcriptionists now upload the court's copy of the transcript which is immediately placed in the court file and improves access to the records for all users and streamlines the process for appeals*
- *15,749 court-appointed attorney payment vouchers were processed*

ATTORNEY PAYMENTS PROCESSED

Case Types	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>
Family Division			
Juvenile Delinquency	1,046	1,052	1,188
Neglect and Abuse	4,875	4,905	4,992
Other	25	32	47
Total	5,946	5,989	6,227
Civil/Criminal Division			
Appeals	242	214	214
Criminal	2,992	2,911	3,002
District Court	790	430	826
Violations of Probation	2,323	2,142	2,218
Trials	64	37	58
Other	558	288	326
Total	6,969	6,022	6,644
Probate Court			
Estates and Mental Health	3,044	2,625	2,878
Grand Total	15,959	14,636	15,749

DATA TECHNOLOGY UNIT

Under the supervision of Lisa Czyz, Court Technical Services Supervisor, the Data Technology Unit is responsible for court technology and automation for the courts, including assisting both staff and litigants with court programs and video conference initiatives. This unit is the liaison to Oakland County's Department of Information Technology, various vendors, and other state and local government agencies.

In 2017, the following initiatives enhanced services through technology:

- *Successfully transitioned to a new version of Odyssey File & Serve eFiling application, allowing for more secure storage of financial information*
- *Completed update to MiFILE, the statewide eFiling initiative which involved transitioning nearly 7,500 users to a new eFiling application instituted by the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) to make eFiling uniform across all courts in the State of Michigan*
- *In a cooperative effort with Genesee County and multiple district courts, implemented a new jury management system that allows for jurors to complete questionnaires online and choose their preferred method of communication*
- *Successfully reported the SCAO Permanency Indicator Report for juvenile cases for the first time*
- *Instituted an automated process for submission of juvenile transcripts*
- *Expanded the internal processing of electronic documents, allowing for easier, more efficient inter-departmental transfer of documents*
- *Finalized Probate departmental needs assessment, as well as common components, for a new document management system*
- *Upgraded aging video recording equipment in six courtrooms*

COURT RESOURCE AND PROGRAM SUPPORT UNIT

The Court Resource and Program Support Unit is an area of general responsibility overseen by Karen Koshen. Responsibilities include providing informational, technical, and administrative support services to the judges, various court departments, and outside agencies, as well as coordinating and assisting with special projects, events, and media relations. Other responsibilities include maintaining judicial attendance records, preparing and maintaining the Bail Bondsman List, updating the BCORP Emergency Plan for the Circuit Court and preparation of the annual report, press releases, historical roster of the courts, and other publications.

Special events in 2017 included:

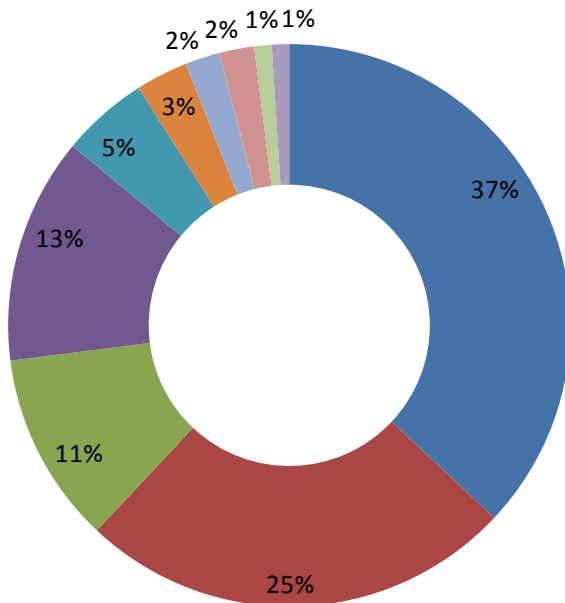
- *Judicial Investitures for Judge Victoria A. Valentine and Judge Jennifer Callaghan*
- *New Lawyer Admission Ceremonies, Adoption Day program, and Constitution Day program*
- *Courthouse employee functions, plaque ceremonies, special breakfasts, luncheons, and retirements*
- *Organized and assisted with six Removing the Mysteries of the Probate Court seminars throughout Oakland County*



Judge Warren's annual Constitution Day program was a fun and educational experience for nearly 300 middle school students.

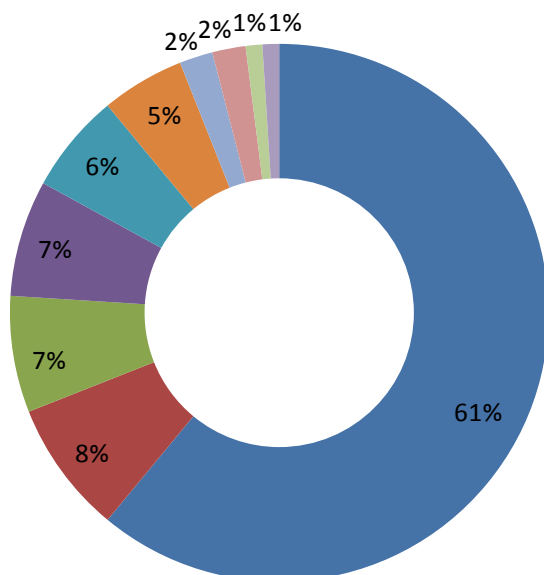
Financial Reports— Circuit and Probate Courts

2017 Revenues—\$35,237,907



- Child Care Reimbursement - \$13,004,913
- Friend of the Court CRP Contract - \$8,703,063
- Friend of the Court Fees and Revenues - \$3,974,313
- Transfer In - \$4,664,170
- Other/Miscellaneous Reimbursement - \$1,680,455
- Attorney Fee Reimbursement - \$1,130,229
- Mediation Payments and Fines - \$610,350
- Costs - \$686,786
- Probate Fees and Revenues - \$536,491
- Jury Fees and eFiling Fees - \$247,137

2017 Expenditures—\$66,637,052



- Personnel Costs - \$40,597,385
- Youth Out-of-Home Care Costs - \$5,706,470
- Transfer Out - \$4,672,670
- Court-Appointed Attorney Costs - \$4,411,699
- Data/Communication Technology Costs - \$3,893,005
- Facility Costs - \$3,751,610
- Other/Miscellaneous - \$1,425,892
- Other Case-Related Costs - \$1,118,468
- Supplies/Materials/Furniture Costs - \$658,394
- Professional Services - \$401,459

Most Valuable Persons (MVPs)

Nominations for Most Valuable Persons (MVPs) are submitted twice a year for Circuit and Probate Court employees who have performed exemplary service and exhibited dedication to the courts and the public they serve. After careful consideration, Circuit and Probate Court MVPs were selected and recognized in the Full Court Press and at the Employee Recognition Ceremony in December.

These MVPs were nominated for having performed their duties at a high level of competence and routinely demonstrating superior service that far exceeds their written job descriptions. They are recognized for their hard work, dedication, and enthusiasm that they bring to their jobs on a daily basis.

The courts are fortunate to have many talented employees and salute the following 2017 MVPs:

T.J. Tabin—Data Technology Unit
Aaron Flanigan—Judge Grant’s Chambers
Lisa Weil-Hull—Friend of the Court
Barb Aubin—Juvenile Court

Amber Kish—Youth Assistance
Michelle Glover—Jury Office
Joanne Bridson—Friend of the Court
Julius McDonald—Probate Court



The following MVPs were introduced by their supervisors at the 2017 Employee Recognition Ceremony held in December: (left to right) Lisa Weil-Hull, Michelle Glover, Joanne Bridson, Julius McDonald, T.J. Tabin, Aaron Flanigan, Barb Aubin, and Amber Kish. Circuit Judge Chief Judge Nanci Grant and Probate Court Chief Judge Pro Tem Kathleen A. Ryan (center) were on hand to congratulate the MVPs and thank them for their dedication to the courts.

2017 Highlights



2017 Highlights



Employees Make A Difference

CHARITY EVENTS

Courthouse employees are known for their generosity and for giving with their hearts, as evidenced by the several charities that have benefited from various events throughout the year. Court-wide Casual Days allow employees to dress down for \$1 and all funds collected are distributed through nominations of worthy organizations. Since 2004, almost \$50,000 has been donated to a variety of charities through Casual Day donations.

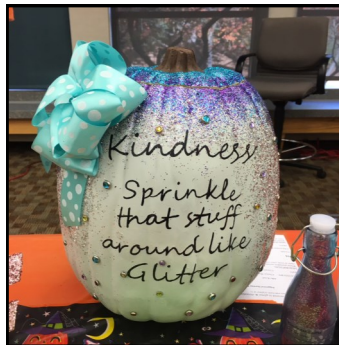
Several individual departments and judges' chambers have supported many worthwhile charities on their own throughout the year including March of Dimes, the Oakland County Animal Shelter, and Lighthouse of Oakland County. Through the County's Pumpkin Auction and charity drive, donations were made to ALS of Michigan, Alzheimer's Association, Detroit Institute for Children, Fallen & Wounded Soldiers Fund, Forgotten Harvest, HAVEN, Hope Hospitality and Warming Center, and The Rainbow Connection.

2017 Courts' Casual Day Recipients

*Grace Centers of Hope
Gleaners Food Bank
Forgotten Harvest
Toys for Tots*

*The Haven
Feed My Starving Children
Alzheimer's Association
Lighthouse of Oakland County*

Pumpkin Auction



Oakland County Animal Shelter Donation



Lighthouse Soup and Dessert Luncheon and Thanksgiving Food Drive



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Circuit and Probate Courts would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their valuable contributions to the 2017 Annual Report for the Sixth Judicial Circuit Court and the Oakland County Probate Court:

Managers and supervisors of the offices highlighted in this report for their input with regard to office functions and accomplishments.

Pictorial contributions by John Meiu, courtesy of Detroit Legal News Publishing LLC; Phill DeBarr, Data Technology Unit; and Beth Sayles, Sayles Studio.

Katherine Siebenaler and Chari Christie for lending their editing and proofreading expertise.

Karen Koshen for overseeing and managing the project.



