

**STATE OF THE JUDICIARY  
ADDRESS  
1999**



**Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson**

Wisconsin Supreme Court

P.O. Box 1688

Madison, WI 53701

(608) 266-1885

**Annual meeting of the Wisconsin Judicial Conference  
State Bar of Wisconsin Midwinter Convention**

January 26, 2000

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson  
State of the Judiciary Address  
January 26, 2000**

**Joint Bench-Bar Conference:  
Annual Meeting of the Judicial Conference  
State Bar Midwinter Convention  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin**

Welcome to the joint bench-bar conference. Every six years since 1988 the judges and lawyers of the state meet together at the State Bar Midwinter Convention. Judges are, as you know, recovering lawyers.

We have before us what promises to be an excellent program. I extend our thanks to the conference chairs, Justice Ann Walsh Bradley and Attorney Susan Steingass, to the conference planning committee named in the program, and to the staffs of the Office of Judicial Education and the State Bar.

It is fitting that the bar and the bench meet together periodically because our ultimate goals are the same -- to do justice. John Jay, the first Chief Justice of the United States, said, "Next to doing right, the great object in the administration of justice should be to give public satisfaction."

\* \* \* \*

Following tradition, each year the chief justice reports on the state of the Wisconsin judiciary. I appreciate the opportunity this year to report to the bar as well as to the bench. I present this report today with pride in our past accomplishments and with optimism as we face the challenges of the new century.

I begin this address, again following tradition, with noting the changes that have occurred within our judicial family since our last conference. We express our sadness at the passing of the following judges:

- Dennis Bailey, Washburn County Circuit Court
- Wallace A. Brady, Juneau County Circuit Court
- William L. Buenzli, Dane County Circuit Court

- John K. Callahan, Green County Circuit Court
- Robert W. Dean, Marathon County Court, Court of Appeals
- Louis I. Drecktrah, Jackson County Circuit Court
- Earl J. McMahon, Columbia County Circuit Court
- Milton L. Meister, Washington County Circuit Court
- Clair H. Voss, Waukesha County Circuit Court
- Thomas W. Wells, Dodge County Circuit Court

While we express sadness at losing colleagues, there is joy in welcoming new colleagues. Justice Diane S. Sykes replaces Justice Donald W. Steinmetz on the Wisconsin Supreme Court. Let me also now recognize the other members of the Supreme Court – Justices William A. Bablitch, Jon P. Wilcox, Ann Walsh Bradley, N. Patrick Crooks, and David Prosser, Jr.

Our new circuit court judges are:

- John Albert, Dane County
- Carl Ashley, Milwaukee County
- Patrick M. Brady, Marathon County
- Michael Brennan, Milwaukee County
- Jon M. Counsell, Clark County
- David T. Flanagan, Dane County
- William M. Gabler, Eau Claire
- Michael G. Grzeca, Brown County
- Glenn Hartley, Lincoln County
- Randy R. Koschnick, Jefferson County
- James O. Miller, Columbia County
- Marshall Murray, Milwaukee County
- Dale T. Pasell, La Crosse County
- Ralph M. Ramirez, Waukesha County
- David C. Resheske, Washington County
- John Siefert, Milwaukee County
- William Sosnay, Milwaukee County
- Robert P. VanDeHey, Grant County
- Robert J. Wirtz, Fond du Lac County

\* \* \* \*

The theme of this conference is MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER – REFOCUSING THE PROFESSION FOR THE MILLENNIUM. As we move forward together, we should, in good lawyer-like

tradition, build on the past. We should keep what works, cast off what does not, and redefine our roles and institutions as needed.

I look back to 1990, a decade ago, when the judges met in Stevens Point for their annual judicial conference. The judges worked with a facilitator to focus on the problems, challenges, and opportunities facing the Wisconsin judicial system. The process of self-evaluation was difficult, and few have forgotten it. The judges wanted the judicial branch to set a course for the future, and the trial judges wanted to increase their role and include the public in setting the direction of the court system. The work of that three-day 1990 conference can be summarized in these three words: "innovate and communicate."

As to innovation, the judges compiled a list of initiatives to set the direction of the judicial system. We pledged to put our ideas in motion.

As to communication, the judges wanted improved communications among all levels of court and staff, as well as with the lawyers of the state, the executive and legislative branches, the media and the public.

As we begin a new century let us look at key innovations the judges suggested in 1990 and evaluate our progress. We know that change is certain, but progress is not. Some of you may remember me as a tough grader, and I still am. My grading system for our progress in adopting innovative programs is as follows:

- Accomplishments Exceed Expectations
- Progress Is Shown, and
- The Decade Ahead: Skills We Need to Move Forward

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS EXCEED EXPECTATIONS

In several areas our innovations during this decade have exceeded the judges' 1990 expectations. I want to touch on the primary ones - technology and communication.

#### Technology

The Circuit Court Automation Program (CCAP) has been widely accepted across the state and is a model for other

states. The continued success of this program is dependent on adequate funding, and CCAP funding has been and will continue to be a top budget priority for us. We are pleased that the Legislature has recognized the importance of CCAP to the trial courts and has provided about \$16 million dollars over this biennium for its operation.

Today every circuit clerk's office is or soon will be fully automated. Judges have personal computers with access to case management information, jury instructions, e-mail, the Internet, computerized legal research and computer training. The Director of State Courts Office oversees over 2,500 workstations in 70 of Wisconsin's 72 counties.

Since 1990 when judges suggested videoconferencing, the price of technology has dropped, equipment and telephone lines have improved, and videoconferencing has become feasible.

To help judges and county boards develop videoconferencing capabilities, the Wisconsin Counties Association and I, as chair of the Planning and Policy Advisory Committee (PPAC), convened a statewide multidisciplinary committee in March 1998 to draft a videoconferencing manual.

The videoconferencing manual was completed and distributed throughout the state in June 1999. The National Center for State Courts has since posted our manual on its Web site, and the manual is becoming a model for other states. Another example of "innovate and communicate."

In 1998 we created a Wisconsin court system home page on the World Wide Web, a phenomenon we had not anticipated in 1990. Lawyers, judges and the public can now access information ranging from Supreme Court and appellate court decisions to court forms to descriptions of court programs. In fact, when you get back to the office you can promptly access the text of my speech today. Ain't technology grand!

A new feature of our Web site is Wisconsin Circuit Court Access (WCCA), which allows public access to circuit court case information. For example, if you wanted to check the status of a case pending in La Crosse County, you

could simply go to the court Web site, click on "circuit court access," and enter the name of one of the parties. We have an average of over 100,000 hits a day, and one day last week we had 189,000 hits.

With increasing access to personal information, the courts take on the additional responsibility of maintaining personal privacy. The Director of State Courts has appointed an oversight committee that is exploring the issue of electronically available data and privacy.

Although we have exceeded our 1990 expectations in the use of technology, technology continues to advance. PPAC is now looking ahead to how technology might influence the way we maintain a record of court proceedings. We are also laying the groundwork for electronic filing of documents in our appellate and trial courts. Innovate and communicate.

#### Communication

We have also exceeded the expectations of the 1990 judicial conference in our communication efforts.

First, the Supreme Court opened its administrative conferences in April 1999, as the judges requested in 1990. Just within the last week the Court spent two days in open administrative conference discussing the restructuring of the lawyer discipline system.

Second, for the past three years appellate and trial judges have engaged in a successful voluntary Judicial Exchange Program, as the judges requested in 1990. The Judicial Exchange Program helps judges better understand the roles and challenges of both the trial and appellate courts.

Third, as the judges also requested in 1990, the Supreme Court hired a public information officer, and our communication efforts have vastly improved and expanded. *The Third Branch*, our in-house publication, did not exist in 1990. It is now a more than 20 page quarterly publication that is distributed to over 2,600 people with all the court news that's fit to print.

The public information officer has initiated many public education programs, some of which have won national awards. Indeed, Wisconsin is recognized nationally as a

leader in educating the public about the court system. The State Bar and the Supreme Court have teamed up to provide educational programs for students and teachers, including Court with Class and a teacher training institute, which will be convened in February.

The court system and the Bar also joined forces in 1999 to organize an educational seminar for judges, lawyers and representatives of the print and electronic media. The seminar topic was sentencing, and judges and media representatives switched roles to help them better understand the challenges of sentencing and reporting. We are planning additional seminars during the coming months.

The Supreme Court has taken a leadership role in encouraging communication between the courts and the communities they serve. Members of the public sit on boards and committees established by the courts. Through the Volunteers in the Courts initiative, thousands of volunteers contribute thousands of hours to court initiatives across the state, and we continue to increase opportunities for volunteer service in the courts by disseminating information on unique and successful programs.

In keeping with the judges' 1990 suggestion to communicate with the executive and legislative branches so that each branch better understands the operations and needs of the others, we established the Judicial Ride-Along Program, which pairs legislators and county board supervisors with judges for a day on the bench. Legislators are attending district meetings with trial and appellate judges.

The Supreme Court has met with cabinet officers and with several Assembly and Senate committees. Two issues of great interest to both judges and legislators quickly surfaced: how do judges interpret statutes, and how do they determine legislative intent? A seminar for judges, legislators and legislative staff devoted to statutory interpretation is now in the works.

As you see, we have made much progress but we must continue to exceed expectations in our communication efforts. We must establish cooperative ventures with civic organizations and government entities whose work affects the courts and invite more citizen participation in

policymaking. Achieving equal justice under the law is a quest not only for lawyers and judges, but for all the people. We must move forward together to innovate and communicate.

### PROGRESS IS SHOWN

Numerous innovations proposed in 1990 may be summarized under the heading "improving access to justice." Justice is denied when basic access to the court system is unreasonably expensive, too difficult or too confusing. The judges expressed concern in 1990 that our legal institutions were failing to heed Judge Learned Hand's admonition: "Thou shalt not ration justice."

As to the judges' 1990 proposals to improve access to justice, I can report that progress is being made:

- Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). In 1990, alternative dispute resolution was identified as one tool to provide improved access to the justice system. The hope was that court-annexed alternative dispute resolution would be less expensive and more timely than trials. Since then the Supreme Court has adopted a rule authorizing the use of ADR in appropriate cases and has conducted a survey of ADR use in the state. The survey indicates that judges and lawyers are pleased with and increasingly using alternative dispute resolution techniques. A number of communities, including Brown, Eau Claire, Trempealeau and Winnebago counties, now train volunteers in mediation and provide dispute resolution options for small claims and other matters.

To facilitate continued progress, PPAC is establishing a clearinghouse for information on ADR use in the state and is in the preliminary stages of developing a resource manual on ADR for judges.

- Unrepresented (Pro Se) Litigants. In my 1998 state of the judiciary speech I discussed the growing national phenomenon of unrepresented litigants, an issue the judges identified in 1990.

Our system is designed to function and works best with counsel present. Yet more and more people are appearing in civil judicial proceedings without counsel, especially



in family law matters. Many do not obtain legal assistance because they simply cannot afford it.

Imagine a secretary who despite making repeated attempts to save her marriage decides that she must get a divorce. She decides her income cannot pay both current bills and attorney fees and she proceeds without an attorney. She goes to the courthouse, asks for information at the clerk's office and repeatedly gets the same answer, "I can't give you legal advice." She does research at the public library and finds forms. She wades through the legalese and completes them. When she finally gets to court to tell her story the judge tells her "you can't say that" or "you need a different form or more information" and "you will have to come back another day when you get a signature on a document."

Is it any wonder that people think we are unresponsive?

If we are to provide equal justice for all, we must assist those who cannot afford to pay for counsel. We are pleased that the Legislature has, at the urging of the State Bar, appropriated \$100,000 a year in the biennial budget to provide legal services to low-income residents.

We shall, however, also have to design a system that works for people who represent themselves. Pro se litigation has reached such proportions across the nation that when the American Judicature Society organized a national conference on the topic, the conference was oversubscribed. To follow up on the momentum created by the conference, I appointed a Wisconsin team consisting of lawyers, judges, clerks of court, and representatives of groups working with pro se litigants to propose a plan for Wisconsin by which lawyers and non-lawyers can improve access to justice for unrepresented litigants. The group is considering such options as standardized and simplified forms and instructions, a pro se hotline and Web site, clarification of the role of the clerks of court in assisting pro se litigants, state and local bar association programs to provide pro bono legal services or lay advocates, and training for judges and clerks in working with pro se litigants.

The Milwaukee County courts have recently received funding for a pro se coordinator. Richland, Milwaukee and Waukesha counties are developing innovative programs for pro se litigants. The Tenth Judicial District will take part in a two-day management retreat in May to focus on improving service to people who represent themselves in court. Progress on meeting the challenge of pro se litigation is being made, but the bench and bar must move forward on this issue.

ADR and pro se litigation may appear to be an assault on the adversarial model to which we are accustomed. They need not be. The bench and bar can resist reforms and let others make them, or we can innovate. Changes imposed from outside the legal structure may be more disruptive and less successful than innovations that we devise.

- Equal Justice for All. Wisconsin has long been a state with a diverse population, with different languages and cultures, and we continue this tradition into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A survey conducted by the National Center for State Courts in early 1999 reveals that a substantial number of people in this country believe that the justice system does not treat everyone equally; that the rich are treated better than the poor; that certain racial and ethnic groups are treated better than others; and that men are treated better than women. Some may argue there is no bias in fact, but merely a perception of bias. Perception cannot, however, be ignored. People have confidence in and trust a court system if they perceive the system as providing a forum where disputes are impartially resolved. We have been at work this past year in addressing issues of equal justice and opening lines of communication.
- Access for Those with Physical Disabilities or Whose First Language Is Not English. To make justice accessible to those with physical disabilities we have been working to make courtrooms comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Recently the Director of State Courts appointed a statewide multidisciplinary committee to identify issues regarding the use and availability of both foreign language and sign language interpreters in the courts. The committee is concentrating on issues such as

interpreter training, a code of conduct for interpreters, and the viability of technology to improve access to interpreters. The committee's assignment is difficult but critical to providing equal justice. There can be no justice if a person cannot understand the court proceedings and if accurate interpreting is not available.

- Racial and Gender Equality. The 1999 National Center for State Courts survey reports that African-Americans and Hispanics are significantly less likely than whites to agree that judges are generally honest and fair in deciding cases. Almost 70% of African-American respondents think that African-Americans, as a group, get worse treatment from courts than whites.

Working to stamp out bias are the Judicial Conference Gender Equality Committee, the State Bar's Committee on Participation of Women in the Bar, the State Bar's Diversity Outreach Committee, and the State Bar's Committee on Placement of Minority Attorneys. The Legislature has also established a committee on increasing minority representation in the judiciary, to which Governor Thompson and I have made appointments.

It is, of course, imperative for all of us, judges, court staff and counsel, to scrutinize our own conduct to eradicate any vestiges of bias.

- Courthouse Security. In just plain physical terms, the judges wanted courthouses to be safe. In response to this proposal, in 1995 the Supreme Court issued guidelines for courthouse security. Since then, many county boards have made significant progress toward improved courthouse security.
- Court Costs. Court costs and fees established by the Legislature have been rising. People should not be priced out of the courthouse, and the judiciary has been calling this problem to the Legislature's attention.
- Counsel for People Who Are Indigent. In 1990 the judges suggested that the public defender standards of indigency for representing criminal defendants be revised. The standards have not been changed since 1987. As a result, judges have the burden of appointing defense counsel for people who are indigent, and the costs of providing

counsel fall on unhappy county boards rather than on the state. In 1998 counties spent \$3.8 million, up from \$2 million in 1996. Again, we have called legislators' attention to this issue.

We need to continue to improve access to justice. We must ensure that we are providing justice, not rationing it. The guiding principle: "innovate and communicate."

#### THE DECADE AHEAD: SKILLS WE NEED TO MOVE FORWARD

I turn now to the skills we need to develop in this decade to move forward and, where necessary, refocus our institutions and the profession.

- Judicial Elections and Campaign Financing. The 1990 judicial conference had the foresight to ask that we improve our skills in judicial selection, including election campaigns and campaign financing. The Supreme Court's blue-ribbon commission on Judicial Elections and Ethics headed by Judge Thomas E. Fairchild of the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit filed its report with the Court in 1999. The commission's recommendations and report were printed in the *Marquette Law Review* and have been circulated across the state. Comments on the report should be filed with the Court by March 1. As you all know, I am sure, the Legislature has also been addressing these difficult issues.
- Judges as Problem-Solvers: "Involved Judging." The traditional view of a judge is as a neutral decisionmaker deciding each case on the facts and the law, one case at a time. Judges ordinarily are not involved after the litigants leave the courtroom.

Judges across the state are thinking "outside the box" and have put into effect innovative programs outside the courtrooms to assist their communities. In Dodge County, for example, judges initiated the Responsibility Adjustment Program (RAP) where each month they organize and participate in a community service project with a group of young offenders. In Marathon County, the court and community have come together in the innovative Volunteers in Prevention program. The program coordinates a peer court, community service, mentoring, tutoring, truancy abatement and parenting classes to

identify and intervene in the lives of at-risk children. In Barron County, the judge's support for restorative justice has resulted in a community-based agency that trains volunteers to mediate victim-offender conferences. These and other types of court-community partnerships are judicial innovations at the county level that help solve or prevent problems that might ultimately come to the courts. These judges are innovating and communicating outside the courthouse.

Many are urging judges to participate actively inside the courtroom to solve social problems. Judges and the public increasingly view the court process as ineffectual in dealing with the serious problems that come to the courts such as domestic violence, dysfunctional families, alcohol and drug abuse, and juvenile offenses. Too often the courtroom's exit door is described as a revolving door. A judge completes a case, enters a judgment, and before long, that person is back.

The judicial system should, some say, look beyond legal process and precedents to achieve outcomes. They want judges to be problem-solvers. This demand for more involved judging is exemplified by drug courts and unified family courts.

The drug court model is part of the search for a more effective way to stop drug and alcohol abuse. Drug courts provide immediate intervention, non-adversarial adjudication, hands-on and repeated judicial involvement, and a team approach, bringing together judge, prosecutor, defense counsel, treatment provider, law enforcement and correctional staff to develop and monitor structured treatment programs. The judge is not simply the adjudicator; the judge supervises the defendant through frequent appearances in court. Dane County is innovating with a drug court.

One-family, one-judge courts, called unified family courts, are being piloted in La Crosse and Monroe counties in Wisconsin. The proponents of unified family courts assert that courts should focus attention on the whole family and the delivery of social services, not merely on individual members of the family or on particular problems of the family such as divorce, child custody disputes, child abuse or truancy. The innovative

La Crosse project is already producing good results, according to a preliminary assessment.

Another example of involved judging is the Milwaukee County Circuit Court domestic violence program. The courts are working with the Milwaukee Commission on Domestic Violence to enhance support for victims and improve judicial oversight of offenders. These efforts are federally funded.

Drug courts, unified family courts, mental health courts, reentry courts, community courts, restorative justice, early intervention, judicial supervision of government services and judicial monitoring of individual progress are concepts we shall be hearing more about in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The public and the federal government are moving courts in the direction of involved judging, in judges' addressing social problems in the courtroom. Lawyers will also need to explore and develop their role as problem-solvers and peacemakers.

Involved judging has significant institutional implications for judges, lawyers and society.

First, judges would need to change their function from neutral decisionmaker to problem-solver.

Second, judges would need to change their focus from process to outcome.

Third, judges would have to recognize that their coercive powers will be used to change people's behaviors.

Finally, judges would need to collaborate with and supervise the work of government agencies and community groups. This kind of judicial involvement is resource- and time-intensive.

Involved judging is not part of our judicial tradition. Involved judging raises serious questions concerning neutrality and fairness, qualities we value. On the other hand, involved judging is showing some positive results across the country. The tension between the two models, the traditional neutral judge and involved judging, will continue to grow in the coming decade. We can resist change, or we can move forward to

devise innovative ways in which the judicial system can meet the public's needs, while still maintaining our necessary independence as neutral decisionmakers.

- Judicial Independence: Public Trust and Confidence. A final challenge the judges recognized in 1990 was maintaining judicial independence and bolstering public trust and confidence in the judicial system.

Judicial independence embodies the concept that judges decide cases fairly, impartially and according to the facts and the law, not according to whim, prejudice, fear, the dictates of other branches of government or the latest public opinion poll.

Judicial independence is a means to an end, the end being the resolution of disputes based on law. We have to be sure that judges have the independence to adhere to the rule of law and protect the rights of the few against the many. Yet judges must be accountable so that the public is assured of fairness and competence. So too the bar must be free to represent clients ethically, honestly and competently without fear of peril or retaliation. As Chief Justice Warren Burger said, "The vindication of every great right in a free society depends on the quality and independence of the bar and the judiciary."

The independence of the judge rests initially on the courage of the individual. But ultimately the independence of the judiciary rests on the public's willingness to support and fight for this independence. In turn the public's willingness to support and fight for judicial independence depends on the public's understanding of and trust and confidence in the system. A public that does not trust its judges to exercise even-handed judgment will look upon judicial independence as a problem to be eradicated, not a value to be preserved.

The President of the League of Women Voters, the State Bar President, the Director of State Courts and I have appointed an eleven-member steering committee on public trust and confidence to address this critical issue.

While Americans may be cynical about lawyers and government, we lawyers and judges consider ourselves privileged to serve the public and consider our jobs to be of high public calling. We accept that the public

rightfully demands the highest degree of professionalism, ethics and service from the bench and the bar.

\* \* \* \*

In conclusion let me say that we can all be proud of how far the judicial system has come in the past decade, and we can all be proud of the direction in which we are heading.

As the justices of the Supreme Court walk to our temporary chambers on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in Madison, we see the dome of the Capitol building down the street. At the top of the dome is a dazzling gilded statue of a woman who reaches toward us, her hand pointing forward. Forward is and will continue to be our direction.

There is, of course, much to do and we must do it together. The process of self-evaluation that was begun in 1990 must continue. The maxim "innovate and communicate" will guide us.

My thanks for inviting me to give this report on the state of the judiciary and my best wishes for a successful conference. I look forward to working with you all in the years ahead. Remember that I am in the phone book. Call me at (608) 266-1885. I need and welcome your help as we serve the people of this great state.



**Following is a list of contact people for the programs and committees mentioned in the address:**

**Alternative Dispute Resolution**

Dan Wassink, Senior Policy Analyst, Director of State Courts Office; 608/266-8861

**Circuit Court Automation Program**

Jean Bousquet, CCAP Director, Director of State Courts; 608/267-3728

**Committee on Increasing Minority Representation in the Judiciary**

Judge Maxine A. White, Milwaukee County Circuit Court; 414/278-4482

**Courthouse Security**

Dan Wassink, Senior Policy Analyst, Director of State Courts Office; 608/266-8861

**Dane County Drug Court**

Judge Stuart A. Schwartz, Dane County Circuit Court; 608/267-2517

**Dodge County Responsibility Adjustment Program**

Judge Daniel W. Klossner, Dodge County Circuit Court; 920/386-3541

**Interpreter Committee**

Judge Elsa C. Lamelas, Milwaukee County Circuit Court; 414/278-4554

Marcia Vandercook, Office of Court Operations, Director of State Courts Office; 608/267-7335

**Judicial Conference Gender Equality Committee**

Judge Daniel S. George, Columbia County Circuit Court; 608/742-9631

Meg Ford, Office of Court Operations, Director of State Courts Office; 608/267-7764

**Judicial Exchange Program**

Presiding Judges of the Court of Appeals Districts

Circuit Court Chief Judges of the Judicial Administrative Districts

District Court Administrators

**Judicial Ride-Along Program**

Amanda K. Todd, Court Information Officer, Director of State Courts Office; 608/264-6256

**Marathon County Volunteers in Prevention**

Will Fleischman, VIP Coordinator; 715/848-7207

**Media Relations**

Amanda K. Todd, Court Information Officer, Director of State Courts Office; 608/264-6256

**Milwaukee Domestic Violence Program**

Judge Richard J. Sankovitz, Milwaukee County Circuit Court; 414/278-4490

**Outreach & Education Programs**

Amanda K Todd, Court Information Officer, Director of State Courts Office; 608/264-6256

**Planning and Policy Advisory Committee**

Dan Wassink, Senior Policy Analyst, Director of State Courts Office; 608/266-8861

**Pro Se Working Group**

John Voelker, Executive Assistant to the Chief Justice; 608/261-8297

**Public Trust & Confidence in the Justice System**

John Voelker, Executive Assistant to the Chief Justice; 608/261-8297

Trina E. Haag, Public Affairs Coordinator, State Bar of Wisconsin; 608/250-6025

**Restorative Justice Programs, Inc. (Barron County)**

Deb Neuheissel, Restorative Justice Programs coordinator; 715/436-3304

**State Bar's Committee on Participation of Women in the Bar**

Atty. Iris M. Christenson; 608/273-8609

April R. Barker; 920/233-6521

Pat Morgan, Committee Project Coordinator, State Bar of Wisconsin; (608) 250-6107

**State Bar's Committee on Placement of Minority Attorneys**

Atty. Cory L. Nettles; 414/277-5307

Pat Morgan, Committee Project Coordinator, State Bar of Wisconsin; (608) 250-6107

**State Bar's Diversity Outreach Committee**

Atty. Maria S. Dixon; 414/257-7879

Atty. Jacqueline Hatter; 608/249-2111

Pat Morgan, Committee Project Coordinator, State Bar of Wisconsin; (608) 250-6107

**Supreme Court Meetings with Legislative Committees**

Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson, Wisconsin Supreme Court; 608/266-1885

Sheryl Gervasi, Legislative Liaison, Director of State Courts; 608/266-6984

**Unified Family Courts**

Judge Steven L. Abbott, Monroe County Circuit Court; 608/269-8700

Judge Michael J. McApline, Monroe County Circuit Court; 608/269-8926

Steven R. Steadman, District Court Administrator, District VII (La Crosse); 608/785-9546

**Videoconferencing in Wisconsin Courts**

John Voelker, Executive Assistant to the Chief Justice; 608/261-8297

**Volunteers in the Courts Initiative**

Karen Leone de Nie, Program Assistant, Wisconsin Supreme Court; 608/266-1298

**Wisconsin Court System Web site**

Pam Radloff, Office of Management Services, Director of State Courts Office; 608/266-6865

**Wisconsin Circuit Court Access Oversight Committee**

Jean Bousquet, CCAP Director, Director of State Courts Office; 608/267-3728

---

**More information on the initiatives mentioned in the State of the Judiciary can be found on the court system Web site:**

**American Bar Association's Report of the Wisconsin Lawyer Regulation System**

<http://www.courts.state.wi.us/misc/aba.html>

**Supreme Court's Commission on Judicial Elections and Ethics Report**

<http://www.courts.state.wi.us/supreme/elections/e&ecom.html>

**Wisconsin Circuit Court Access**

<http://ccap.courts.state.wi.us/InternetCourtAccess/>