

JB-CSSD CHRONICLE

A publication of the Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division (JB-CSSD)



July 2023

Hello JB-CSSD,

I am happy to share with you this quarter's chronicle. Please take a few minutes to read about the great work going on in our Family Services and Administration units. Outstanding work.

Congratulations to Lisa Killiany on receiving the Susan B. Anthony award and to Danielle Hamill Sanquedolce and Nicole Stutz for being honored as CCADV's 100 plus recipients during this past year's annual business meeting.

Also, please take a moment to review this quarter's "Getting It Done" section.

Congratulations to Joelyne (Jody) Holley and Juan Garcia for being recognized for the outstanding work they do for the Branch.

Lastly, I hope everybody is enjoying the summer months. I can't believe we are at the end of July already and Fall is just around the corner. I hope you all have had, or will have, restful vacations and that you recharge and get ready for a very busy last quarter of this calendar year. As I always say, I couldn't be more proud of the work we do and the difference we make in the lives of the people and families we work with. You all do outstanding work and continue to make JB-CSSD a leader in state government.

Thank you.

-Gary

Susan B. Anthony Project Award



Pictured: FRC Lisa Killiany (right) accepts an award from Gina Devaux (left), Director of Development for the Susan B. Anthony Foundation

Lisa Killiany, Torrington Family Relations Counselor II was recently honored by the Susan B. Anthony Project for her commitment to ending Domestic Violence and her devotion to helping survivors. An award ceremony was recently held at Coe Park in Torrington where Lisa was honored and presented with a plaque. Lisa has been a Family Relations Counselor since 2003, working in the Bristol, Danbury and Torrington Family Services Offices.

CCADV's First 100 Plus Class of 2023

JB-CSSD Regional Manager Danielle Hamill Sanquedolce and Family Relations Counselor Nicole Stutz from Putnam Family Services were recently selected into CCADV's First 100 Plus Class of 2023. The recipients are people who have demonstrated leadership and commitment to improving the lives of domestic violence survivors in Connecticut. While each person is varied in his or her background and profession, each one has contributed to making a difference either statewide or within his or her local community. This is another excellent example of our staff being recognized for our commitment to support victim safety with the overreaching goal to prevent, reduce, and stop the severity of violence against victims. Congratulations to Danielle and Nicole and to all those who have and continue to do this challenging work.

JB-CSSD Family Services Participates in Connecticut Bar Association's Legal Conference June 5, 2023

JB-CSSD Family Services was honored to be part of a panel discussing the Pathways process within our Family Civil Court. This panel, which included the Honorable Michael A. Albis – Chief Administrative Family Judge, Attorney Samuel Schoonmaker, and Deputy Director Joe DiTunno was part of a very impressive program hosted by the CT Bar Association.

The title of the panel discussion was “The Pathfinder: Navigating the Pathways Process” and drew a large number of attendees. The three panelists provided a historical overview and current trends from different perspectives. Judge Albis offered a viewpoint from a global Judicial Branch lens, as well as from the Bench; Attorney Schoonmaker spoke as a consumer of the new process, and Deputy Director DiTunno was able to discuss Pathways as it relates to JB- CSSD Family Services.

Judge Michael A. Albis provided some key statistics that point directly to the positive impact of the Pathways model being implemented in Connecticut.

The statistics show that:

- As the result of the pandemic's extended impact on court operations, the number of pending family cases statewide had grown to 9,077 on December 31, 2021, which is when we began implementing Pathways primarily through in- person proceedings. By December 31, 2022, the pending caseload had been reduced to 6,490, a decrease of 28.5%.
- The number of pending family cases as of January 1, 2019 (the beginning of the last year before the pandemic) was 6,640. One year after the general return to in-person proceedings, the family courts had successfully implemented Pathways to reduce pending family cases to a number (6,490) that was actually below that pre-pandemic level.
- In 2022, the family courts disposed of more family cases (actions for dissolution of marriage, legal separation, annulment, custody, and visitation) than in any single year since 2016.
- The courts disposed of about 2,000 more family cases in 2022 compared to 2019, the last year before the pandemic – an increase of 13%.

As it relates directly to JB-CSSD Family Services, Joe DiTunno reported that in 2022, Family Services completed 13,556 RPDs and was able to identify almost 40% of those cases as TRACK A; meaning that the cases were ready for judgment or disposition. Also discussed was the National Center for State Courts recently completed initial evaluation of the RPD process, specifically focusing on how issues of domestic violence were addressed by JB-CSSD Family Services.

It is important to participate in community-based events, such as the CT Bar Association, with other critical stakeholders. The question-and-answer period was productive and shed important insight into how the Pathways process is evolving across the State of Connecticut in the Family Courts.

Teaching The Next JB-CSSD Family Services Generation in Pre-Service Training

One of the most rewarding aspects of being with JB- CSSD Family Services is having the opportunity to train our new Family Relations Counselor Trainees during their Pre-Service Training program. Numerous Supervisors and senior Family Relations Counselors take time out of their busy and hectic schedules to assist Administration in this vital year long process. Some of the topics that are included in the over 200-hour program includes: Understanding the Role of the FRC in the Criminal Court, CMIS and Systems, Resolution Plan Dates, Child Support & Alimony, Family Law Software, Temporary Restraining Orders, our Family Court Direct Services, Court Issues, Report Writing, Court Negotiations, and Witness Prep and Testifying.

Aaron Dzamko - Danbury Supervisor, Christine Tardette - Hartford Supervisor, and Donna Sauer - Lead Family Relations Counselor - New Britain and Pam Lang - Lead Family Relations Counselor in the Training Academy recently taught the Comprehensive Evaluation Process to the most recent class of Trainees.

According to Christine Tardette “I love training the new staff as they are the future of our organization. It is important to show them our dedication to the work and Family Services.” Aaron Dzamko agreed with this as well and added, “It is nice to get to know staff from across the state. It helps make important connections and solidifies us all working together to enhance Family Services.” Pam Lang, Lead Family Relations Counselor assigned to the Training Academy, is responsible for organizing all the trainings and this is no small accomplishment. Pam collaborates with the Deputy Director of Family Services and the Regional Managers to ensure our staff receives robust and innovative trainings to enhance their professional development.



Individuals With Limited English Proficiency

If English is your native language, you may underestimate the challenges faced by people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), particularly regarding their access to justice. The issue is pervasive, though. Did you know that according to the 2021 U.S. Census Bureau, 22.8% of the Connecticut population ages 5 years and over speak a language other than English at home? In fact, individuals ages 5 years and older with LEP make up 8.9% of Connecticut's population and the number of individuals in Connecticut with LEP has continued to steadily increase over the past 20 years. According to the Connecticut Judicial Branch (JB) Language Access Plan, published in 2021, this increase aligns with the experience of Connecticut's courts – "more individuals who are limited English proficient are accessing our court facilities, processes, and information."

Phase 1 of the Judicial Branch's Strategic Plan, which began in 2008, stated that, "The Judicial Branch will provide equal access to all its facilities, processes, and information through the identification of and elimination of barriers." Confidence in the judicial system hinges upon a person's belief that they will be treated fairly and with respect, regardless of proficiency in English. That is why the Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division (JB-CSSD) has prioritized removing barriers for individuals with LEP who interact with the court system.

JB-CSSD requires its contracted providers to have bilingual staff (English & Spanish) and to provide forms and brochures in more than one language. Because bilingual staff bring additional value, JB-CSSD also requires providers to detail how they are going to recruit, hire, and retain their bilingual staff. Service providers are encouraged to offer incentives, such as paying their bilingual staff at a premium, to ensure that bilingual staff are paid fairly for their highly valuable and sought after skills. And like JB staff, JB-CSSD's contracted providers are required to complete Limited English Proficiency training, the same training mandated for all JB-CSSD employees.

JB-CSSD also contracts for interpreting services at no cost to clients. The top five most translated languages are (1) Spanish, (2) Portuguese, (3) American Sign Language, (4) Polish, and (5) Russian. The process for accessing an interpreter is fairly simple- when a client with LEP is referred to a JB-CSSD contracted program and it is determined that interpreter services are necessary, the vendor emails the contracted interpreting service to request one. Interpreters are utilized for a variety of situations including intake, groups, case management, and family counseling and can be used in-person, by phone, or virtually. Interpreters are available for both adults and juveniles, and interpreter services extend to the family of juveniles as well.

Just like the Connecticut population of individuals with LEP has grown over the past several years, the need of interpreter services by JB-CSSD has, too. In Fiscal Year 20/21, JB-CSSD invested \$342,387 on interpreting services within programs, and in Fiscal Year 21/22, that almost doubled to \$712,684.

JB-CSSD's commitment to persons with LEP is not new, though. In 2015 and 2016, in recognition of the fact that many cognitive-behavioral interventions in the contracted service network were

available only in English, JB-CSSD asked the authors of evidence-based curricula if they'd agree to having their materials translated into Spanish. The authors and publishers of Aggression Replacement Training, Voices, TARGET, and Carey Guides all agreed and JB-CSSD invested in an independent contractor for the sole purpose of translating the materials to Spanish. JB-CSSD also had its own curricula, Employment Services, translated into Spanish. To ensure accuracy, the process for translating materials involves changing the content from English to Spanish, then that Spanish version is translated back to English by another entity. The authors / publishers of the curricula reviewed the twice translated material to ensure the integrity of the process. This exercise is an example of our commitment to providing equal access to justice for persons with LEP.

JB-CSSD is committed to adapting to changing demographics to ensure equal access for all. For more information about limited English proficiency in general, please visit our intranet site Zeus and reference the Internal Committees and Resources sections. The Branch has also recently established a new unit for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and the JB-CSSD expects to work closely with this Administrative Services Division department to ensure that clients served by the Branch or its contracted services providers are responsive to the needs of clients with Limited English Proficiency.

Preschool through 20 Workforce Information Network (P20 WIN)

JB-CSSD is excited to have joined the Preschool through 20 Workforce Information Network (P20 WIN), which is Connecticut's state longitudinal data system hosted by the Office of Policy and Management. Alongside JB-CSSD, there are approximately 13 other participating state agencies, institutions of higher education, and non-profits, including the Office of Early Childhood, the State Department of Education, the University of Connecticut, the Department of Labor, the CT Conference of Independent Colleges, Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, the Department of Social Services, the Department of Children and Families, the Office of Higher Education, the CT Coalition to End Homeless, and the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System.

P20 WIN is a cross-agency data sharing network that securely shares and matches longitudinal data across multiple agencies to inform sound policies and practices. The overall goal of P20 WIN is to ensure that individuals can successfully navigate supportive services and educational pathways into the workforce. P20 WIN focuses on disparities in education, workforce training, housing, and welfare services to improve support for individuals across the state. Having joined P20 WIN, JBCSSD can now benefit from its data support and resources. JBCSSD participates in several data sharing initiatives with state agencies, universities, and community organizations to support research on a variety of topics, including recidivism outcomes and cross-system utilization. P20 WIN staff and the data integration hub alleviates a significant amount of work in the agreement process and data transfer.

Although the effectiveness of the juvenile and criminal justice systems has historically been measured by recidivism rates, JB-CSSD seeks to understand client success beyond rearrest and reoffending, to include housing, education, employment, and overall well-being. P20 WIN opens opportunities to understand the larger ecology of an individual, from early childhood into adulthood, rather than a snapshot of their contact with the justice system. JB-CSSD can more easily examine employment retention for clients who complete the employment services group or analyze racial and ethnic disparities among unstably housed and homeless clients. Through the P20 WIN partnership, JB-CSSD can also more fully understand program outcomes, improve data-driven decision-making, and enhance the overall success and wellness of individuals, families, and communities.

Participation in P20 WIN would not be possible without support from Chief Court Administrator Honorable Judge Elizabeth Bozzuto, Executive Director Gary Roberge, Judicial Branch Legal Services, and the JB-CSSD Business Intelligence Unit.

Getting it Done

Hello again,

I am very happy to share with you with quarter's "Getting it Done" recipients. Congratulations to Jody and Juan for being selected this quarter and please take a moment to read about both of them and the exceptional work they do. I think you will agree, we are very fortunate to have Jody and Juan on our team and their commitment to our work is second to none. Thank you Jody and Juan for the work you do and being great colleagues in the JB-CSSD.

Who will be recognized in the next edition of the JB-CSSD Chronicle. We shall see. Thank you everybody for your attention to his information.

-Gary

JB-CSSD Family Services



Joelyne (Jody) Holley has worked for Judicial Branch CSSD-Family Services for nearly two decades and joined Central Office on May 6, 2022. The duties Jody is responsible for include supporting and training field staff, monitoring CMIS Assistance, testing enhancements for CMIS-II. Jody is a vital contributor to the CMIS-II Family Civil rewrite. On a quarterly basis, Jody tests on weekends for CMIS releases to ensure smooth implementation of all the enhancements. Furthermore, Jody always makes herself available to the entire Family administrative staff and has proven herself an invaluable resource. Jody demonstrates unfaltering dedication to the projects assigned to her. In addition to her CMIS responsibilities, Jody continues to be an active member of the Support Staff Training Advisory Committee and trains new and seasoned staff. Jody also has traveled to offices to help on-board new intake assistants. Jody comes to work each day with unequalled energy and passion. Jody recently enrolled in college to further her education and currently has an A average. Jody personifies a "Getting it Done" attitude and is an esteemed member of JB-CSSD.

JB-CSSD Administration

Juan Garcia has been with the Judicial Branch for four years, working as an Information Technology Analyst III in the JB-CSSD IT Unit. As a result of Juan's strong communication skills, work-ethic, and knowledge base, he was appointed as project lead to re-write the CMIS- CRMVS batch job processes. This was an immense undertaking, requiring close collaboration with ITD as well as a detailed understanding of Court Operations' defendant and docket data. Juan went above and beyond in getting this project completed, on time and with the critical accuracy it required.



Juan's ability to work independently, while also knowing when to ask questions and of whom, are vital components not only to the success of our team, but to the case management applications supporting the Branch.