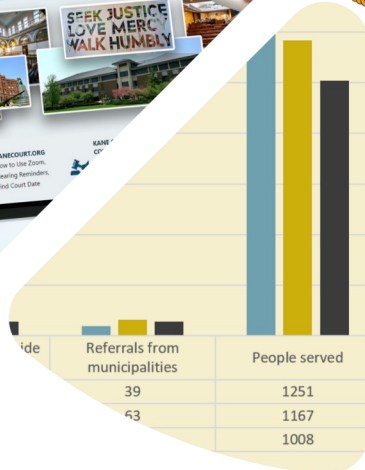
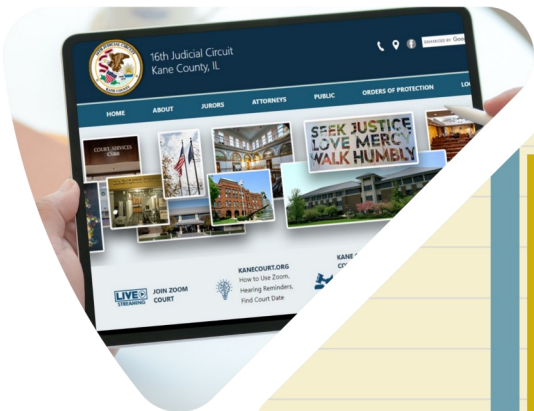



# Sixteenth Judicial Circuit Court

# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

County of Kane  
State of Illinois



 Office of the Chief Judge

 37W777 IL RT 38, Suite 400A  
St. Charles, IL

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# Table of CONTENTS

- 04**  
Mission and Vision
- 05**  
Message from the Chief Judge  
Leading the Courts of the Future
- 06**  
2022 Snapshot
- 08**  
Kane County Justice System  
2022-2025 Strategic Plan
- 12**  
About the Sixteenth Judicial  
Circuit: Judges
- 13**  
Judges Spotlight
- 20**  
Court Overview
- 21**  
New Courtrooms Spotlight
- 22**  
Court Divisions  
Civil | Juvenile | Family | Felony & Jury  
Trials | Misdemeanor & Traffic | Misdemeanor/Traffic & Jury Trials
- 28**  
Felony Division Spotlight
- 31**  
Problem-Solving Courts  
Drug Rehabilitation Court | Treatment  
Alternative Court | Veterans  
Alternative Court
- 34**  
Facility Dog Spotlight
- 35**  
Court Administration  
Administration | Arbitration | Bailiffs |  
Children’s Waiting Room | Jury  
Commission | Mediation | Protective  
Orders | Interpreting & Language  
Access | Court Reporting Services |  
Law Library & Self Help Legal Center
- 41**  
Librarian Spotlight
- 42**  
Special Programs  
Worries of the World Wide Web |  
School Visitations | Mock Trials
- 43**  
Special Programs Spotlight
- 44**  
Looking Ahead to 2023

# Mission STATEMENT

To maintain an accessible, fair, and impartial court system, which resolves disputes in a timely and efficient manner while strengthening public trust.



# Vision

We strive to be leaders within the Judicial Branch by:

- ▶ Providing the highest quality of services to all.
- ▶ Treating everyone with courtesy, dignity, empathy, and respect.
- ▶ Embracing and reflecting the diversity in our community.
- ▶ Anticipating, adapting, and responding to the needs of our community.

# Core Values



## FAIR

We are impartial, act without bias, and treat all people equally.



## PROFESSIONAL

We treat everyone with dignity and respect.



## TIMELY

We provide services and resolve legal matters in a timely and efficient manner.



## EFFECTIVE

We use practices and programs that achieve effective outcomes for court participants and the community.



## COLLABORATIVE

We are inclusive and work together to achieve mutual goals.



## INNOVATIVE

We are proactive, creative, and experiment with new ways to enhance performance and outcomes.



## ACCOUNTABLE

We are responsible for our conduct and performance and use public resources prudently and responsibly.

# A Message from the **CHIEF JUDGE**



**Honorable  
Clint Hull**  
Circuit Judge

## **2022** **Leading the Courts of the Future**

In the following pages, I am excited to share the great work done by our judges, judicial staff, and judicial partners throughout 2022. Since March 2019, when COVID first impacted our world, the 16th Circuit and Courts throughout our country have been focused on how to keep the Courts operating despite the challenges presented by the pandemic. In 2022, with COVID under control, the 16th Circuit focused on leading the court system into the future.

Success in any organization starts with its people, and 2022 saw the 16th Circuit hire a new Trial Court and Deputy Court Administrator. Andrea O'Brien (Trial Court Administrator) and Jason Mathis (Deputy Court Administrator) were hired after a nationwide search. Judges Julio César Valdez and Bianca Camargo were appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court as Circuit Judges. Attorneys Kim DiGiovanni and Bill Engerman were sworn in as our two newest Associate Judges. We look forward to seeing all of them make their impact felt for years to come.

For organizations to succeed, they need to have a vision for the future. For the first time in 15 years, the 16th Circuit developed a strategic plan. Through the collective efforts of our judges and justice partners, we developed a mission and vi-

sion statement along with core values to help guide us. Moving forward, we will focus on increasing the public trust and understanding of our justice system, on workforce excellence, implementing justice reforms passed by our legislature, and working on plans to address the space needs of our court system.

Staying on the cutting edge of technology will be essential for success, and we took several important steps in 2022 to keep us moving forward. Two new courtrooms were built with the most advanced technology, providing a better court experience for judges, attorneys, and the public. An electronic recording system was installed at the Kane County Courthouse (3rd Street), allowing for more court proceedings to be recorded and transcribed, with plans in 2023 to establish the same equipment at the Judicial Center.

We also applied for and will receive **\$6 million** in grant funding from the Kane County Board and the State of Illinois to upgrade the technology in all of the courtrooms in the 16th Circuit.

The 16th Circuit is prepared for the future. Please take a moment to review our annual report to learn about the outstanding work performed by the 16th Judicial Circuit in 2022.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Clint Hull". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

# 2022 SNAPSHOT

## JANUARY

- ▶ Court operations scaled due to COVID

## FEBRUARY

- ▶ Masks no longer required in court-houses

## MARCH

- ▶ Illinois Supreme Court asks Chief Judge Hull to serve on the Office of Statewide Pretrial Services Public Safety Advisory Council
- ▶ 16th Judicial Circuit selected as one of three pilot sites for the Pretrial Fairness Act by the Il Supreme Court



## APRIL

- ▶ Veterans Treatment Court graduation
- ▶ Judges Trivia Night
- ▶ Mock Trials held in-person first time since 2019 due to pandemic

## MAY

- ▶ Drug Court Graduation



## JUNE

- ▶ 16th Judicial Circuit debuts redesigned, mobile-friendly website
- ▶ New Juvenile Justice Center courtroom opens
- ▶ Bar vs. Bench Softball Game

## JULY

- ▶ Self-represented Litigant Coordinator receives a \$10,000 grant
- ▶ Kane County Justice System 2022-2025 Strategic Plan launches
- ▶ Judge Bianca Camargo appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court to fill the vacancy by the retirement of Circuit Judge James Murphy.
- ▶ 16th Judicial Circuit receives Online Dispute Resolution grant from AOIC for 2022-2023

# 2022 **SNAPSHOT**

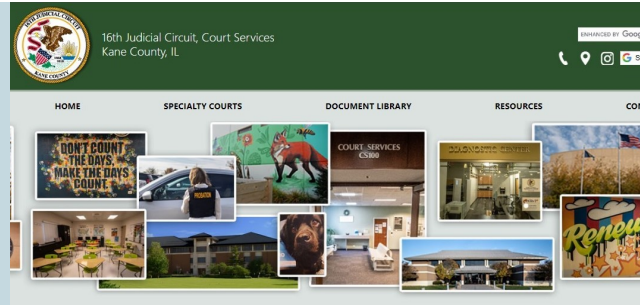
## **AUGUST**

- ▶ Illinois Supreme Court appoints Judge Julio Valdez to Circuit Court Judge
- ▶ Judge John Noverini announces retirement
- ▶ Judge William Parkhurst passes away



## **SEPTEMBER**

- ▶ The Conference of Chief Judges was held at the Kane County Judicial Center



## **OCTOBER**

- ▶ Andrea O'Brien named Court Administrator
- ▶ Court Services launches a redesigned website

## **NOVEMBER**

- ▶ Attorney William Engerman appointed Associate Judge
- ▶ Attorney Kimberly DiGiovanni appointed Associate Judge
- ▶ Teamsters three year contract was signed for Court Services and the Juvenile Justice Center

## **DECEMBER**

- ▶ Jason Mathis named Deputy Court Administrator
- ▶ Courthouse buildings physically closed; all scheduled trials held on Zoom due to extreme weather

Strategic Implementation Plan kickoff meeting with Justice Partner stakeholders and committees.



# Kane County Justice System 2022-2025 Strategic Plan

## Introduction

The Justice System Strategic Plan states the goals and policy directions of the Kane County Justice System. These goals and objectives are based on values important to the effective administration of justice in our system for 2022-2025. The plan allows the Justice System to focus the use of efforts and resources toward both perpetuating the values of the court system and continuing to improve the system. The strategic plan guides the priorities and work of the justice system and is defined by our Mission, Vision, and Core Values:

**Mission:** The Kane County Justice System upholds the law, administers justice, and serves and protects our community.

**Vision:** We strive to be accessible to all, trusted by all, and responsive to the evolving needs of our communities.

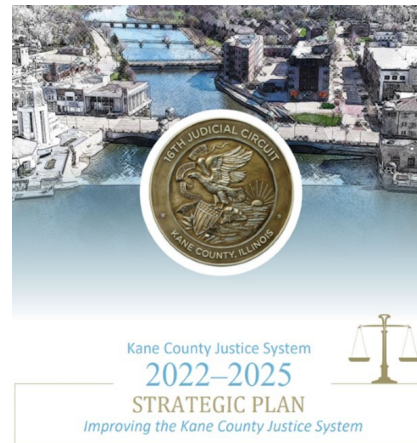
## Core Values

- ▶ **FAIR** We are impartial, act without bias, and treat all people equally.
- ▶ **PROFESSIONAL** We treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- ▶ **TIMELY** We provide services and resolve legal matters in a timely and efficient manner.
- ▶ **EFFECTIVE** We use practices and programs that achieve effective outcomes for court participants and the community.
- ▶ **COLLABORATIVE** We are inclusive and work together to achieve mutual goals.
- ▶ **INNOVATIVE** We are proactive, creative, and explore ways to enhance performance and outcomes.
- ▶ **ACCOUNTABLE** We are responsible for our conduct and performance and use public resources prudently and responsibly.

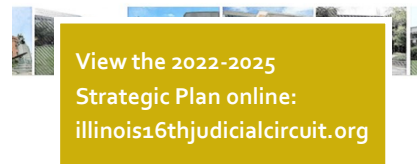


## Justice System Strategic Plan Historical Timeline

In the fall of 2021, with funding assistance from the State Justice Institute (SJI), elected leaders, stakeholders, and the Kane County Justice System staff embarked on a long-range strategic planning process. Partners and stakeholders participating in the process included the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit Court, State’s Attorney’s Office, Public Defender’s Office, Sheriff’s Office, Circuit Clerk’s Office, Information Technologies Department, and representatives from the County Board and the Health Department. This 2022–2025 Strategic Plan (Plan) lays out long-term priorities and will serve as a roadmap for improving the Kane County Justice System.



The twenty-eight-member Kane County Justice System Strategic Planning Team (Team) convened monthly between September 2021 and March 2022 to develop this Plan. The planning sessions were facilitated by Dr. Brenda Wagenknecht-Ivey, CEO of PRAXIS Consulting, Inc. (Denver, CO), and included:



- ▶ Developing a mission, vision, and core values for the justice system
- ▶ Analyzing internal and external trends affecting the justice system and considering future implications and scenarios
- ▶ Summarizing strengths, areas for improvement, and potential concerns facing the Kane County Justice System
- ▶ Identifying areas of mutual interest and opportunities for system-wide collaboration
- ▶ Describing key strategic focus areas and developing long-range goals and strategies for making justice system improvements



*Kane County Justice System Partners are committed to working together to achieve the goals set forth. Doing so is necessary to ensure the highest quality of justice system services to the people of Kane County.*

# Kane County Justice System 2022-2025 Strategic Plan **continued**

## **Strategic Focus Areas**

The Kane County Justice System Strategic Planning Team (Team) analyzed a myriad of external and internal trends and considered their long-term implications on the Kane County Justice System. External trends data included pandemic, social, demographic, economic, technological, policy, political, and national justice system trends. Internal trends data included crime statistics, arrests, filings, sentencing, recidivism, and probation statistics. Through this analysis, the Strategic Planning Committee identified four strategic focus areas that were deemed the top issues to be addressed by the committee. Strategic focus areas are internal or external issues that are fundamentally important to the Kane County Justice System. Significant issues must be addressed in the coming years for the Kane County Justice System to fulfill its mission, work toward the vision, and live its core values.

- ▶ **Justice System Infrastructure** - Court Locations, Facilities, and Physical Space, Access to services, Technology, and Safety and Security
- ▶ **Justice System Reform and Continuum of Services and Programs** - SAFE-T Act, and Expanding the use of existing community resources.
- ▶ **Workforce Excellence** - Recruitment, Retention, and Well-Being of our staff
- ▶ **Public Trust and Understanding** - Our commitment to increasing the public's understanding of our Justice System and maintaining the public's trust and confidence.

Each of these strategic focus areas includes our full list of initiatives and goals we would like to see completed or in process between July 2022 and July 2025.

## **Implementation**

As it relates to year one goals of the Justice System Strategic Plan, the committee broke this down further into a list of initiatives for the first year. Each of the four strategic focus areas received two priorities for completion in year one. An Operational Plan for completion of these 2022-2023 goals was developed. In July of 2022, the Operational Plan was launched, with the original 28 members of the Strategic Planning Committee now joined by team members and Judicial Sponsors to form teams dedicated to each of these initiatives:

1. Facilities Assessment: Future Long-Term Vision for Consolidated Campuses
2. Technology: System Integration and Data Sharing
3. SAFE-T Act Implementation
4. Legislative Updates and Practice Changes
5. Modernize Human Resources and Management Practices
6. Advocate for and Promote Competitive Pay
7. Website Improvements: Links and Mobile Friendly Social Media and Community Events

Each of these initiatives represent the first phase of strategic plan implementation.

## Original Kane County Justice System Strategic Planning Team 2021-22

Hon. Clint Hull Chief Judge	Corrine Pierog Chair, Kane County Board
Theresa E. Barreiro Circuit Clerk	Ron Hain Kane County Sheriff
Rachele Conant Public Defender	Myrna Molina Kane County Board
Roger Fahnestock Executive Director / Chief Information Officer, Kane County IT	Jamie Mosser State's Attorney
Hon. Susan Clancy Boles Circuit Judge	Lisa Aust Executive Director, Court Services
Hon. René Cruz Circuit Judge	Dr. Alexandra Tsang Director of Diagnostic Center, Court Services
Hon. Julio César Valdez Associate Judge	Jason Mathis Supervisor of Pre-Trial Services, Court Services
Doug Naughton Court Administrator	Halle Cox Director, Law Library & Self Help Legal Center
Andrea O'Brien Deputy Court Administrator	Monica Lawrence Chief Information Officer, Circuit Clerk's Office
Karin Herwick Chief Deputy Clerk / Chief Operations Officer, Circuit Clerk's Office	Kristy Sharpness Operations Liaison / Payroll, Circuit Clerk's Office
Michael Isaacson Asst. Director, Community Health, Health Dept.	Charles Lasky Dep. CIO / Chief of Staff, Kane County IT
Kim Bilbrey Attorney, Public Defender's Office	Vincent Coyle Attorney, State's Attorney's Office
Pam Bradley Administrative Support, State's Attorney's Office	Jessica Orsini Deputy Director of Deferred Prosecution Program, State's Attorney's Office
Perparim Osmani Commander of Jail, Kane County Sheriff's Office	Dr. Brenda Wagenknecht-Ivey Strategic Planning Consultant, PRAXIS Consulting

### 2023

As we move into 2023, we continue to utilize the Strategic Plan as a roadmap for improving the Kane County Justice System. Each team is hard at work on their initiatives outlined in the Operational Plan. Each Strategic Planning Team will review achievables and tactics for accomplishing each objective quarterly. Teams will then prioritize which objectives will be accomplished for the next quarter.

# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit **JUDGES**



## OVERVIEW

The Sixteenth Judicial Circuit has 14 Circuit Judges and 17 Associate Judges. In Circuit Courts, there are two types of Judges: Circuit Judges and Associate Judges. Circuit Judges are elected by popular vote for an initial six-year term and may be retained by voters for additional six-year terms.

## CIRCUIT JUDGES

Circuit Judges can hear any circuit court case. Circuit Judges are initially elected either circuit-wide, from the county where they reside or from a sub-circuit within a circuit, depending on the type of vacancy they are filling.

## ASSOCIATE JUDGES

Circuit Judges appoint and vote to retain Associate Judges for four-year terms. Associate Judges may hear all types of cases, except felony matters, which require special authorization from the Illinois Supreme Court.

## CHIEF JUDGE

Circuit Judges elect one of their members to serve as Chief Judge. The Chief Judge of the Sixteenth Circuit is the Honorable Clint Hull who is currently serving his second term which expires at the end of 2023.

## NOTABLE IN 2022

In August 2022, Circuit Judge, the Honorable John A. Noverini announced his retirement which the Illinois Supreme Court filled with Associate Judge Julio César Valdez.

Also in August 2022, Associate Judge William J. Parkhurst passed away after his battle with cancer (*see his spotlight on page 19*). Attorneys Kimberly DiGiovanni and William Engerman were selected to fill the Associate Judge vacancies left by the Hon. Valdez Circuit appointment and the Hon. Noverini's retirement (*see their spotlight on page 15*).

## Sixteenth Judicial Circuit Judges

**Hon. Donald C. Hudson**  
Second District  
Appellate Court Judge

### CIRCUIT JUDGES

**Hon. Clint Hull**  
Chief Judge

**Hon. John A. Barsanti**  
Presiding Felony Division

**Hon. Susan Clancy Boles**  
Presiding Civil Division

**Hon. Kevin T. Busch**

**Hon. Bianca Camargo**

**Hon. René Cruz**  
Presiding Traffic/Misdemeanor  
Division

**Hon. John G. Dalton**

**Hon. Elizabeth K. Flood**

**Hon. Joseph M. Grady**

**Hon. Michael J. Noland**

**Hon. John A. Noverini**  
Announces retirement 8/22/22

**Hon. D.J. Tegeler**  
Presiding Family Division

**Hon. Julio César Valdez**

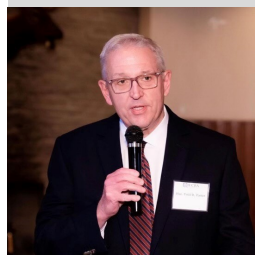
**Hon. Robert K. Villa**

# Judges SPOTLIGHT



**Chief Judge Clint Hull**  
Circuit Court Judge

- ▶ Appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court to the Pretrial Implementation Task Force
- ▶ Appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court as Co-Chair of the Pretrial Fairness Act Guidelines Committee
- ▶ Appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court to the Pretrial Fairness Act Pilot Site Committee. Kane County was selected to be one of three pilot sites in the State of Illinois
- ▶ Recipient of the 2022 Kane County Chiefs of Police Association President's Award in recognition of outstanding contribution, service, and unparalleled dedication to the Kane County Chiefs of Police Association for his work on the implementation of the Pretrial Fairness Act
- ▶ Recipient of the 2022 Partners in Peace Award from the Community Crisis Center for giving special help to domestic violence survivors



**Judge Todd Tarter**  
Associate Judge

- ▶ Received the 2022 Illinois Creditors Bar Association's Alexander P. White Award to honor individual judges who, in the course of their careers, and through their rulings and demeanor, created a fair playing field for both creditors and debtors within the court system, and who also advanced the law regarding the enforcement of Judgments

## Sixteenth Judicial Circuit Judges

### ASSOCIATE JUDGES

**Hon. Reginald N. Campbell**

**Hon. Bradley P. David**

**Hon. Kimberly DiGiovanni**

**Hon. Christine A. Downs**

**Hon. William Engerman**

**Hon. Keith A. Johnson**

**Hon. Kathryn D. Karayannis**  
Presiding Juvenile Division

**Hon. David P. Kliment**

**Hon. Marmarie J. Kostelny**

**Hon. Salvatore LoPiccolo Jr.**

**Hon. Sandra T. Parga**

**Hon. William J. Parkhurst**  
Passed away on 8/26/2022

**Hon. Charles E. Petersen**

**Hon. Mark A. Pheanis**

**Hon. Divya K. Sarang**

**Hon. Todd B. Tarter**

**Hon. Alice C. Tracy**

**Hon. Julia A. Yetter**

# Judges SPOTLIGHT



**Judge Julio César Valdez**  
Circuit Judge

- ▶ Associate Judge Julio César Valdez was appointed Sixteenth Judicial Circuit Judge on August 16 by the Illinois Supreme Court to fill the vacancy of retired Circuit Judge John Noverini
- ▶ Volunteered for the College Mock Trials



**Judge Michael Noland**  
Circuit Judge

- ▶ Presented a program on the perils and consequences of sexting to 8th grade students at Kaneland-Harter Middle School
- ▶ Panelist in the Kane County Bar Association's guardian ad litem training
- ▶ Volunteered to be a celebrity chef at a charity event held by Elgin Community College

**Judge Valdez being sworn in as Circuit Judge by Chief Judge Hull**



**Judge Noland showing off his culinary skills at a charity event**

# Judges SPOTLIGHT



**Judge Kim DiGiovanni**  
Associate Judge

## ***16th Judicial Circuit Welcomes Two New Associate Judges***

Attorneys Kimberly (Kim) DiGiovanni and William (Bill) Engerman received the most 16th Judicial Circuit judges' votes, qualifying them to fill the positions left by the elevation of the Honorable Julio César Valdez to the seat of Circuit Judge effective August 16, 2022 (following Judge John Noverini's retirement) and the passing of Associate Judge William Parkhurst on August 26, 2022.

Chief Judge Clint Hull expressed his utmost confidence in the selection of Attorneys DiGiovanni and Engerman for the Kane County associate judge vacancies. "While the passing of Judge Parkhurst makes this a difficult time for all of us here at the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit, we are eager for attorneys DiGiovanni and Engerman to help us continue Judge Parkhurst's legacy of excellence on the bench."



**Judge William Engerman**  
Associate Judge



**Judge Keith Johnson**  
Associate Judge

- ▶ Elected to the Board of Directors of the Illinois Judges Association (IJA) at their annual meeting in June at Chicago-Kent College of Law
- ▶ Presented "Worries of the World Wide Web" at several middle schools discussing the problems of cyberbullying, electronic harassment, and sexting; along with the consequences of poor choices when using social media
- ▶ Taught domestic violence case concerns for the New Judge Seminar



**Judge Marmarie Kostelny**  
Associate Judge

- ▶ Appointed to the Supreme Court Advisory Committee for Justice and Mental Health Planning
- ▶ Chaired a multi-disciplinary team to develop a DUI specific treatment court in Kane County
- ▶ Attended the National Association for Drug Court Professionals annual conference with all three problem solving court teams
- ▶ Presided over Drug Court graduations for sixteen individuals, three Treatment Alternative Court graduations and one Veterans Treatment Court graduation

# Judges SPOTLIGHT



**Judge Christine Downs**  
Associate Judge

- ▶ Presented on a panel discussion for the Women’s Bar Association of Illinois to discuss legal issues and judicial approaches to cases where one spouse controls all the marital assets
- ▶ Panelist in the Kane County Bar Association’s guardian ad litem training
- ▶ Reappointed to the Illinois Supreme Court committee on professional responsibilities



**Judge Reginald Campbell**  
Associate Judge

- ▶ Spoke at the very first graduation ceremony of a not-for-profit organization for its pre-employment readiness-training program
- ▶ Participated in interviews by college students for a class assignment regarding his role as a judge



**Judge John Dalton**  
Circuit Court Judge

- ▶ Taught at the Judicial Education Conference (EdCon), New Judge Seminar, and taught a webinar at AOIC’s request for other judges on evictions and rent relief
- ▶ Read to two elementary school classes
- ▶ Working on a first-in-the-nation ODR program for evictions
- ▶ Served on a focus group of Chief Judges and Presiding Judges for a new online reporting system which will bring statewide court data to the next level



**Judge Sandra Parga**  
Associate Judge

- ▶ College of Judicial Education member
- ▶ Co-chair of the New Judge Orientation workgroup
- ▶ Chair of the Language Access Committee
- ▶ Fox Valley Literacy Program tutor
- ▶ Volunteered at Lazarus House



# Judges SPOTLIGHT



**Judge Kevin Busch**  
Circuit Judge

***Judge Busch talks about his involvement in the Kane County Bar Association:***

“The Bar Association serves dual purposes. Promoting professionalism as well as collegiality. On October 21 and 22, the Kane County Bar Association presented its 2022 Bar Show titled *Anything Goes*.

As a regular cast member and contributor to these shows, I am grateful for the friendships they engender.

The show has a tradition of offering clever musical parody for the members of the bar and their guests to enjoy. This year’s show was no exception.”

Judge Busch performs in the Bar Show, *Anything Goes*.



Kane County Judges Johnson, Sarang, Busch, Pheanis, Karayannis, Kostelny, and Cruz attend and participate in the Kane County Bar Association’s show *Anything Goes*.

# Judges SPOTLIGHT



**By Honorable Julia Yetter**  
Associate Judge

In February of 2021, Governor Pritzker signed into law the SAFE-T Act, which mandated many changes in the criminal justice system, including the elimination of cash bail as of January 1, 2023. To prepare the 16th Circuit for those changes, Chief Judge Clint Hull created the Kane County SAFE-T Act Task Force and appointed Associate Judge Julia Yetter as its chairperson.

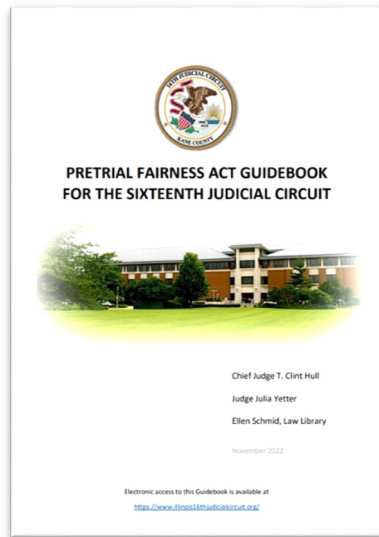
The task force, comprised of members from the State's Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, Court Services, Circuit Clerk's Office, Sheriff's Department, community-based services, and local police departments, as well as the judiciary and court administration, met biweekly beginning in January of 2022 and continued throughout the year working toward the development of a system that would implement those changes required to the current bail bond system. This group spent countless hours working together and in subcommittees to identify the areas that required change and then to develop policy and procedure to implement those changes.

On March 22, 2022, the Illinois Supreme Court selected the 16th Circuit to be a pilot site for implementing the no cash bond sys-

tem. This meant that the 16th would serve as an example to the other judicial circuits regarding the procedures implemented and resources created to address the new system.

As a result of the hard work and collaboration by its members, the task force developed new policy and procedures to implement the no cash bail system, created all of the new forms required to be used by law enforcement and the courts, as well as created training materials for the judicial and community partners who would be involved in the operation of the new system.

Execution of the no cash bond system required by the SAFE-T Act was stayed by the Illinois Supreme Court on December 31, 2022, to maintain consistency throughout the state while the Court hears an appeal pending before it challenging the constitutionality of the statute. However, Kane County stands ready to implement the change in the law if so directed by the Court.



# Judges SPOTLIGHT



**Honorable William Parkhurst**  
Associate Judge

*Judge Parkhurst serves as guest reader during Family Reading Night With the Judges in 2015*

By Ellen Schmid

Associate Judge William J. Parkhurst passed away on August 26, 2022, after a lengthy battle with cancer. Judge Parkhurst was appointed Associate Judge for the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit in 2012. His distinguished judicial career included presiding over court calls in the criminal, family, and juvenile divisions. Judge Parkhurst, however, was best known for his kindness, smiles, and overall humble demeanor. He was admired and respected by all.

Chief Judge Clint Hull stated: “Judge Parkhurst (Bill) was the best of the best. Bill came to work each day feeling blessed that he had an opportunity to work on behalf of the citizens of Kane County. He treated everyone that appeared before him with respect and kindness. I feel lucky to have had the opportunity to call him a friend and colleague.”

Prior 16th Judicial Circuit Chief Judges Robert Spence and Judith Brawka mirrored Judge Hull’s sentiments about Judge Parkhurst’s character. Judge Spence said, “Bill was an excellent attorney who modeled integrity and preparedness. As a judge, he was exceptional. He had a keen legal mind and a wonderful temperament. He was firm but also kind and compassionate but even more importantly, he was an intentional father and loving husband.”

The Honorable Judith Brawka remembered Judge Parkhurst as a judge admired by his fellow judges and support staff, respected by the

attorneys who practiced before him, and appreciated by all the citizens in the courtroom. Judge Brawka said that before Judge Parkhurst was appointed to the bench, he had a successful family and juvenile law practice and was committed to improving the lives of children, one of the highest purposes in the law. She continued, “Bill brought the best qualities of working with children with him as a judge: patience, wisdom, dedication, and humility. His absence will be keenly felt. It is an honor to have called Judge Parkhurst a colleague and a friend.”

Judge Parkhurst dreamed about becoming a judge before law school. He received his undergraduate degree from Alma College and his Juris Doctorate (J.D.) from Valparaiso University.

Judge Parkhurst began his career as a law clerk for the federal magistrate in Michigan. He moved to Illinois in 1991 and started a solo practice in Geneva. Prior to becoming a judge, he practiced with the firm of Johnson, Westra, Broeker, Whittaker & Newitt in St. Charles, IL.

Before becoming an associate judge, Judge Parkhurst built his reputation on providing pro bono services for low-income litigants. He has received the designation of Pro Bono Attorney of the Year twice, once in 2006 from the Court Appointed Special Advocates and again in 2008 from the Kane County Bar Association. Before serving on the bench, Judge Parkhurst volunteered with legal aid agencies, including Prairie State Legal Services and Administer Justice.

# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit

## COURT OVERVIEW

### The 16th Judicial Circuit is a single county circuit comprised of Kane County

Article VI, the Judicial Article of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, provides for a unified, three-tiered judiciary consisting of the Supreme Court, Appellate Courts, and Circuit Courts. The Illinois Supreme Court is the highest court in the State. The Illinois Supreme Court is comprised of seven Justices, three from the First Appellate Judicial District and one from the four remaining Appellate Judicial Districts.

The Illinois Appellate Court is the second tier of the judiciary. The Appellate Court is divided into five Judicial Districts. The Sixteenth Judicial Circuit and five other circuits are grouped together to form the Second Judicial District of the Appellate Court. Currently, one circuit judge from Kane County, the **Honorable Donald C. Hudson**, serves on the Illinois Appellate Court, Second District.

Circuit Courts, also known as trial courts, are the first tier of the judiciary. The State of Illinois is divided into 23 Judicial Circuits, including our Sixteenth Judicial Circuit, which is a single county circuit comprised of Kane County. The Circuit Court is a court of general jurisdiction, which means it has original jurisdiction in all matters except those limited cases in which the Supreme Court has original jurisdiction. Trial courts hear a wide variety of civil and criminal cases ranging from small claims and evictions to family/domestic relations and criminal felonies.

Kane County Courthouses



**Kane County Judicial Center**  
37W777 IL RT 38 St. Charles, Illinois 60175



**Kane County Courthouse**  
100 South Third Street Geneva, Illinois 60134



**Kane County Juvenile Justice Center**  
37W655 Route 38 St. Charles, Illinois 60175



**Kane County Branch Court**  
530 South Randall Rd. St. Charles, Illinois 60177



**Kane County Elgin Branch Court**  
150 Dexter Court Elgin, Illinois 60120



**Kane County Aurora Branch Court**  
1200 East Indian Trail Road Aurora, Illinois 60505

Kane County has six courthouses in the 16th Judicial Circuit

# New Courtrooms SPOTLIGHT

The 16th Judicial Circuit grew by two functioning courtrooms in 2022. The Kane County Judicial Center renovated Multi-Purpose Room 001 to handle increased caseloads anticipated by the passing of the Pretrial Fairness Act, and the Juvenile Justice Center gained a new courtroom to hear juvenile abuse and neglect cases previously heard at the Kane County Courthouse. Chief Judge Clint Hull secured funding for both projects from the Kane County Board and worked with the architectural firms Wight & Company and Cordogan Clark to bring both projects to fruition.

## ***Renovating courtroom space in KCJC to handle the anticipated in-person increase of hearings due to the Pretrial Fairness Act***

The buildout of the Multi-Purpose Room (renamed Courtroom 007) created a new working courtroom to conduct in-person and remote hearings designed for use by the State’s Attorney’s Office for Grand Jury proceedings and to absorb Emergency and Plenary Orders of Protection, Expungements, and other case types previously scheduled in Courtroom 005. Courtroom 005 will hear pretrial release and detention cases beginning in 2023. Due to the length and complexity of these decisions, Courtroom 005 will be available all day, no longer allowing for scheduling other case types.

The new courtroom is far more convenient for people coming into the Kane County Judicial Center seeking an Order of Protection. Before, plenary hearings were only scheduled in the afternoons, but now with a designated courtroom, they can be heard throughout the day. The not-to-exceed \$1.2 million cost of Courtroom 007’s renovation required installing new technology such as monitors, cameras, speakers, and furniture.



16th Judicial Circuit 2022 Annual Report

## ***Completion of a new courtroom to hear Juvenile Abuse and Neglect cases at the Juvenile Justice Center***

The new Juvenile Abuse and Neglect courtroom opened for cases in the Juvenile Justice Center on Monday, July 11, 2022. After seeing a spike in juvenile abuse and neglect cases filed over a three-year period, Chief Judge Clint Hull began discussions on how to serve better the needs of children and families involved in the justice system and, along with Juvenile Justice Judges, identified that moving Abuse and Neglect court from its previous Kane County Courthouse location to the JJC would provide the most significant benefit. Having both juvenile divisions in the same place streamlined the justice process and was also the original intent when the JJC was built. Therefore, no additional square footage was needed when planning the buildout of the new juvenile courtroom.

The \$851,548 project, was funded in part by a \$125,000 rollover from the 2019-20 budget, with the remainder reimbursed through 2021 budget savings mainly caused “by the coronavirus pandemic because fewer juries were held and additional costs such as for interpreters and consultants were unneeded,” according to Chief Judge Hull.

**Judge Parga in the newly completed JJC Courtroom**



# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit

## CIVIL DIVISION



**By Honorable Susan Clancy Boles**  
Presiding Judge Civil Division

The Civil Division remains busy and is current with no backlogs in trials or any residual slowdown as an after-effect of the pandemic. All courtrooms have remote proceeding capabilities, and we continue to develop ways to increase the efficiency of the division overall with our judges' use of hybrid court calls and balancing the use of technology with a dedication to in-person appearances when needed.

We continue to upgrade the technology and systems in the old courthouse. We have installed and are utilizing smart court technology in most of the civil courtrooms. This technology provides an accurate record of courtroom proceedings. Additional wiring has been installed to allow for better and more accurate remote court proceeding capabilities, greater bandwidth, and an expansion of electronic recording.

The Civil Division is also engaged in a pilot online dispute resolution program that began development in 2022 and is set for launch in the summer of 2023. Online Dispute Resolution guides parties step-by-step through a web-based process to resolve disputes as quickly as possible. When launched, this system will work to resolve some of the most common and time-consuming landlord/tenant disputes with

greater ease and favorable outcomes. The goal is to encompass all of the functionality, workflows, and communications tools necessary to build any kind of resolution. The project development is being led by Judge John Dalton, who currently presides over the Evictions courtroom.

The outlook for 2023 remains strong as we will continue to upgrade and improve our technology and infrastructure to meet the needs of today's court users.

# 10,666



## Civil Cases Filed

**1.9% increase from 2021**

**Case Types: AR, CC, CH, ED,  
EV, FC, GC, LA, L, MR, MX, SC, TX**

# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit

## JUVENILE DIVISION



**By Honorable Kathryn Karayannis**  
Presiding Judge Juvenile Division

Under the guidance of Chief Judge Hull and with the assistance and support of the Kane County Board, the Juvenile Justice Detention Facility and other Judicial Partners 2022 saw the opening of a new Juvenile Division courtroom. The Juvenile Division now has two fully operational and technologically advanced courtrooms under one roof.

All court divisions are unique, but addressing juveniles and their families is especially so because our youth are our future! On any given day and in any given case, this reality can make these two courtrooms both uplifting and stressful for everyone involved. "Under one roof" provides much greater efficiency and the camaraderie and support necessary to help us address the best interest of our youth and the public's safety. For the Judiciary, the logistical and emotional advantage of being proximally close is a clear benefit to our judges and courtroom partners. For the public, "under one roof" provides logic to the basic question of where to go to gain access to juvenile court both in person and virtually.

While the number of cases we address remains high, the commitment to serving each case individually has not wavered. Both Judges Karayannis and Parga regularly attend lunch hour education seminars and meetings on topics not only specific to juvenile law but on topics such as domestic violence, being trauma-

informed, conscientious decision-making, and providing access to justice.

In both of our courtrooms, we recognize the need for but lack of services for the children and families we see. Often this means larger and time-consuming court calls to provide more frequent monitoring. In our abuse and neglect courtroom, we continue to encourage in-person, virtual, and hybrid access to parents, children, caseworkers, foster parents, and attorneys. It is common for participants to join virtually from outside the United States and sometimes for three different languages to be spoken and interpreted.

In our delinquency courtroom, Judge Parga not only manages a growing number of cases but, through her efforts outside of the courtroom, is committed to maintaining the high standard of our interpreters as well as teaching other judges at various educational conferences.

# 624

## Juvenile Cases Filed

Case Types: JA, JV, JD, AD

# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit

## FAMILY DIVISION



**By Honorable D.J. Tegeler**  
Presiding Judge Family Division

The Family Division, in 2022, continued serving the citizens of Kane County by implementing new procedures, opening new courtrooms, working on perfecting technology for ease of access, and providing excellence in judicial knowledge and skill. In March 2022, Chief Judge Hull appointed me as the presiding judge of the Family Division. I bring over 25 years of family law experience to this division, with Judges Downs, David, Johnson, Noland, and Campbell presiding in their respective courtrooms.

Throughout the year, all of the judges in the Family Division continued to work diligently, as many of the issues affected families throughout the changing landscape and the ending of the pandemic made their way to the family courtrooms. The Family Division dealt with concerns involving job losses, mental health, substance abuse concerns, parenting time, marital and nonmarital funds allocation, and any other issues affecting families in Kane County. Thanks to the access to technology and the hard work of the judges, the Family Division was able to provide access to justice and resolve many of the issues presented.

The Family Division has continued to refine our schedules to promote maximum transparency and access to courtrooms. We have continued with Zoom access for status and some hearings. The Family Division has also opened up the courtroom doors to allow participants, litigants,

attorneys, and any interested individual to appear in person. We welcome all people into our courtrooms.

After the Illinois Supreme Court issued rule 45 (remote appearances), the Family Division was one of the first divisions to comply with this rule. This resulted in changes that helped create consistency in divorce courtrooms schedules and allowed attorneys and the public to determine whether they needed to attend court remotely or in person. The judges in the Family Division continued a partnership with the Kane County Bar Association family committee to have volunteers in the Kane County Law Library on Monday mornings to aid self-represented litigants.

One of the larger projects accomplished in 2022 was opening a new courtroom. Courtroom 007 is a brand-new, state-of-the-art technology courtroom dedicated to the hearings concerning orders of protection. It is with great thanks to Chief Judge Hull and the Kane County Board for their work getting this courtroom open. This courtroom allows the public to file and litigate orders of protection. Before 007, the public had to go to whichever courtroom may have had the ability to hear their case. Courtroom 007 is dedicated to orders of protection and gives the public consistency on where their order of protection case is heard.



# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit

## FAMILY DIVISION continued

The next project on the board is to make improvements to Room 149. Room 149 is the reception/waiting area for people wishing to file an order of protection. We want to make Room 149 more conducive to the work that occurs there and make it easier for the employees to work with petitioners coming in for emergency orders of protection. The hoped-for modifications to the room will make it look more like a reception area with separate windows and stations so that the Family Division can work one-on-one with the petitioners. We are also working on the future implementation of remote filing of orders of protection.

In addition to their judicial duties, the Family Division judges have also dedicated and donated their time to promote the judiciary and help educate the public. Virtually the whole Family Division donated their time on a Saturday in March to be mock trial judges for several schools located in Illinois. All the judges of the Family Division enjoy giving their time to present issues of interest to the public.

In 2022, the Family Division continued working with and communicating with the Kane County Bar Association's Family Division through town hall Zoom and in-person meetings. The Family Division also routinely updates the 16th Judicial Circuit's website and keeps the Kane County Law Library up-to-date on any changes. This allows the public better access to the courts and the Family Division.

In 2022, 1370 divorce actions opened, 526 family cases opened, and 1641 orders of protection opened. With these numbers, an average of

590 cases per family court judge opened in 2022. In divorce cases alone, the Family Division concluded 1385 cases. Six hundred and thirty-eight of those cases concluded were filed in 2022. The oldest case concluded dates back to 2016. Of the divorce cases opened in 2022, almost 50% were concluded within the calendar year.

Lastly, it is a great sadness that we lost one of our colleagues this past year. On August 26, 2022, Judge Bill Parkhurst passed away. He was appointed to the bench in 2012 and was a valued member of the Family Division. His commonsense approach and smile always put people at ease. He was an awesome judge but a much better person. He is truly missed.

*(See other Family Judges accomplishments highlighted in the Spotlight section beginning on page 13.)*

### Family Cases Filed

 **1896**

**9% decrease from 2021**

**Case Types: DC, DN, FA**

# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit FELONY DIVISION



**By Honorable John Barsanti**  
Presiding Judge Felony Division

2022 developed into another year of changes, new solutions, and continued growth for the Felony Division.

In the 2021 annual report, I shared the new solutions to the myriad of new challenges the pandemic brought. This year's report is about the evolution of the Felony Division in response to the post-pandemic realities. First, something called the Owl. Simply put, the Owl is an electronic device that actually looks like an owl, which transmits all activity and speech occurring in an open courtroom during any type of legal proceeding over Zoom. Anyone can enter the Zoom call and participate in and observe everything happening in the courtroom. Lawyers, defendants, and interested parties can check in and, for actual purposes, be live in the courtroom. The Owl allows attorneys to appear remotely, defendants to remain at work and still appear, and citizens to check on their public servants. This efficiency enables the court system to perform its work in the traditional manner while allowing instant public and parties access—a true hybrid of traditional and cutting-edge proceedings.

Another sea of change for the Felony Division in 2022 was the enactment of the Bail Reform Act. This new legislation significantly changes how Illinois courts, lawyers, and judges administer bail. Kane County was appointed to be a pilot program for the entire State in its implementation. Chief Judge Hull began charging judges and

other personnel to prepare training manuals and training sessions to understand the act and how to operate within it. All hands were on deck to show the entire state the way and be prepared for its ground-breaking procedures. Kane County now has manuals and flow charts which explain and train on every aspect of the new law. The felony court judges all went back to school this year to be prepared for the most extensive change to Illinois criminal law and procedure in the last 100 years.

Alongside all the changes, the judges in the Felony Division came to work each day and professionally completed their caseloads. Jury trials have resumed almost to pre-pandemic levels. Bench trials and motion hearings have filled every afternoon. The usual march to justice continued. The five felony court judges, Salvatore LoPiccolo, David Kliment, Betsy Flood, Alice Tracy, and myself, have met every obstacle and learned, understood, and continued to perform the work for our employers, the People of Kane County.

 **2414**  
Felony Cases Filed  
8.5% increase from 2021

# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit

## FELONY JURY TRIALS

Sixteenth Circuit Judges presided over 25 criminal jury trials, for offenses that included but were limited to first degree murder, predatory criminal sexual assault and unlawful use of a weapon by felon. We saw the greatest increase in predatory criminal sexual assaults in 2022.

2022 Felony Jury Trials	
By Offense	Total
Aggravated Battery	1
Aggravated Criminal Sexual Abuse	1
Aggravated Discharge of Firearm	1
Aggravated Driving Under the Influence	1
Aggravated Sexual Abuse	1
Attempt Murder	1
Forgery	1
Home Invasion	1
Manufacture/Deliver a Controlled Substance	1
Murder	3
Official Misconduct	1
Predatory Criminal Sexual Assault	7
Residential Burglary	1
Retail Theft	1
Unlawful Use of Weapon by Felon	2
Violation Order of Protection with priors	1

A special thanks to the Kane County State’s Attorney’s Office, Kane County Public Defender’s Office and the citizens of Kane County who served as jurors. Judge Barsanti says “Jury trials are the bedrock of the criminal justice system.”



# Felony Division SPOTLIGHT



By Chief Judge Clint Hull

## Courts achieve a 55% reduction in number of defendants held one year or more on pretrial cases

In May of 2021, the judges in the Felony Division committed to reducing the number of defendants being held in the Kane County Jail awaiting trial. In doing so, the judges recognized that they had a fundamental obligation to work with our justice partners to see that cases were resolved in a timely and efficient manner.

The first group of cases the Felony Division wanted to address was defendants who were being held at the Kane County Jail for a year or more while awaiting trial. These defendants who had been held a year or more were most often charged with serious felony offenses, including murder, predatory sexual assaults, and other violent crimes. These case types carried long sentences upon conviction, required extensive pretrial discovery, and had complex issues that needed to be addressed before they could be set for trial or resolved through a plea agreement.

This subset of cases was broken down as follows:

- ▶ Defendants held in custody for three or more years
- ▶ Defendants held in custody between two and three years
- ▶ Defendants held in custody between one and two years

In conjunction with the Kane County Circuit Clerk's Office, the numbers were:

DEFENDANTS IN-CUSTODY OF THE KANE CUSTODY ONE YEAR OR MORE (PRE-TRIAL)				
As Of	3+ Years	2 – 3 Years	1 – 2 Years	Total
May 2021	10	26	71	107

## Justice delayed is justice denied

In order to reduce these numbers, the Felony Division judges held a number of meetings. First, the judges met amongst themselves to discuss how each judge ran their respective dockets and the different policies and procedures that were used to move cases through the system. Next, the judges reached out to the Kane County State's Attorney's Office, Kane County Public Defender's Office, private defense bar, and our other justice partners to seek their input and ideas. Finally, the judges decided on "best practices" that could be used with the goal of resolving cases while ensuring fairness for all parties.

# Felony Division **SPOTLIGHT** continued

Seven months later, the Felony Division achieved a **34% reduction** in the number of defendants held for one or more years. As of January 2022, the numbers were:

DEFENDANTS IN-CUSTODY OF THE KANE CUSTODY ONE YEAR OR MORE (PRE-TRIAL)				
As Of	3+ Years	2 – 3 Years	1 – 2 Years	Total
Jan 2022	9	14	48	71

While pleased with the numbers, the judges and justice partners focused on the defendants who had been in custody for three or more years. Upon reviewing these cases, the judges learned that most of the defendants were being held on violent crimes, had asked for multiple continues (continuances), and in many cases, had changed lawyers two to three times during the duration of the case. All of these factors contributed to the extensive delay. In 2022, the Felony Division worked to continue to resolve the in-custody cases with a focus on the three-year or older cases.

As we finished 2022, the numbers speak for themselves. First, the Felony Division **successfully resolved 90%** of the three-year or more in-custody cases, **reducing the number from ten (10) to one (1)**. Second, the number of defendants held between **two to three years was reduced from twenty-six (26) to eleven (11), a 58% reduction**, and the number of defendants held between **one to two years was reduced from seventy-one (71) to thirty-five (35), a 51% reduction**.

DEFENDANTS IN-CUSTODY OF THE KANE CUSTODY ONE YEAR OR MORE (PRE-TRIAL)				
As Of	3+ Years	2 – 3 Years	1 – 2 Years	Total
Jan 2023	1	11	35	47

## Conclusion

Since the inception of the project in May of 2021, the courts have seen a **55% reduction** in the number of defendants held in custody for one year or greater. The Felony Division expects to see the in-custody numbers continue to decrease due to the policies and procedures that have been implemented. The success of this project demonstrates the importance of working collaboratively with our justice partners to achieve goals that benefit the criminal justice system. We are proud of the efforts and look forward to working together on future projects.

# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit MISDEMEANOR & TRAFFIC DIVISION



**By Honorable René Cruz**  
Presiding Judge Misdemeanor & Traffic Division

In 2022 the Misdemeanor & Traffic Division continued providing remote access to the most high-volume courtrooms in Kane County. Additionally, all courtrooms can conduct Jury Trials without delay, and there is no post-pandemic backlog of cases.

The Judges in the Division continue to recognize that multiple court appearances may require to resolve a matter and, therefore, regularly waive a defendant’s presence at routine status dates to minimize the necessity of lost work/wages for defendants as long as they remain in communication with their attorneys and appear when requested.

As a result, all three Branch Courts (Aurora Branch Court, Kane Branch Court, Elgin Branch

Court) continue to conduct a 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. in-person court option and a 10:30 a.m. to noon remote/Zoom option.

The DUI and Domestic Violence courtrooms continue to conduct most status appearances remotely in the mornings with the option to appear in person in the afternoons when necessary. More importantly, this conforms with the recent Supreme Court Rules prescribing remote access options for all criminal matters.

The Misdemeanor & Traffic Division shall continue innovating and finding ways to increase justice access for Kane County court users in 2023.

## MISDEMEANOR JURY TRIALS

2022 Misdemeanor Jury Trials	
By Offense	Total
Domestic Battery	9
Driving Under the Influence	2
Leaving Scene of Accident (Property)	1
Resisting Peace Officer	2
Violation of Stalking/No Contact Order	1
Violation Order of Protection	1

# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit PROBLEM-SOLVING COURTS



By Honorable Marmarie Kostelny

## Drug Rehabilitation Court (DRC)

The Kane County Drug Rehabilitation Court program is designed for high-risk individuals with a substance use disorder. The drug court team consists of justice and treatment professionals working in a non-adversarial manner to reduce the incidence of drug use and reduce recidivism. Drug court is a voluntary program for Kane County residents charged with felony offenses. Participants are required to complete all recommended treatment while being closely supervised by the court and in the community. Participants must regularly appear in court to monitor progress and are frequently drug tested.

In 2022, community-based treatment providers offered more in-person group and individual treatment sessions. Most self-help support meetings are now in-person, although many zoom AA/NA meeting options remain available. The technological advances and capabilities through online meetings and telehealth have augmented the treatment participants receive. Zoom court has been utilized during periods of quarantine or illness for a participant. This has allowed the DRC team to continue their support and monitoring of individuals even during times when they may not be able to be physically present.

The Kane County DRC's customary pro-social activities, which were halted during the pandemic, returned as 2022 progressed. A sub-

stance use disorder is often a disease of isolation, and learning to be social again is an important part of recovery that DRC promotes for their partici-

pants. DRC Book Club met twice during the year. A picnic for all participants and alums was held at LeRoy Oakes Forest Preserve with softball tournaments, a

bags tournament, a rousing game of Bingo, and a fabulous cookout. Drug Court hosted a Holiday party in December for all participants and their families, with a special visit from Santa. Everyone received a special gift thanks to generous donations from the Judges of the 16th Judicial Circuit and the Kane County Specialty Courts Foundation. Graduation ceremonies were held in person in May and October and were live-streamed on YouTube.

The Kane County DRC is in the last year of a \$500,000 three-year federal grant to enhance operations. This grant is designed to assist participants in obtaining treatment, medications, and housing and to enhance drug testing capacities. The Kane County Specialty Courts

*(continued on page 32)*



# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit

## PROBLEM-SOLVING COURTS continued

### Drug Rehabilitation Court

*(continued from page 31)*

Foundation has continued to assist many participants with unique needs and continues to supply incentives for those who achieve milestones in their recovery. The DRC Alumni continued to meet monthly and assist those about to graduate.

In 2022, 64 applications were submitted for entry into the program. After a rigorous screening process, 29 individuals were accepted. Sixteen individuals successfully completed the strict requirements of the program. All felony charges for those individuals were dismissed upon graduation.

### Treatment Alternative Court (TAC)

Treatment Alternative Court (TAC) is a Kane County specialty court program established in 2006 to serve defendants with serious mental health disorders, co-occurring disorders, or developmental disabilities. TAC works with participants to establish appropriate psychiatric and therapeutic care to reduce symptoms and reduce new arrests.

The TAC team identifies individual treatment needs for each participant and provides services to reduce their contact with the criminal justice system and promote public safety. TAC is a voluntary program for Kane County residents charged with either felony or misdemeanor offenses. In addition to mental health treatment, participants receive various forms of evidence-based therapy, housing assistance, and benefits assistance while under intensive judicial monitoring.

The program brings together community-based agencies to address the needs of de-

fendants and provides comprehensive case management with intense judicial supervision in an effort to reduce future criminal activity and incarceration. Two local agencies serve on the TAC team. The Ecker Center for Mental Health provides outpatient mental health treatment for participants residing in the northern half of Kane County. The Association for Individual Development (AID) provides outpatient mental health services for those living in the county's southern half. Various treatment facilities in the area provide substance abuse disorder treatment.

In 2022, 65 applications were reviewed for entry into the program. This application surge reveals the increased need for additional mental health treatment over the last few years. There are currently 21 participants in TAC, with 11 applications awaiting assessments. In 2019, TAC increased its capacity to allow for 30 active participants.



# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit PROBLEM-SOLVING COURTS continued

## Veterans Treatment Court (VTC)

Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) is a specialty court program designed for our Kane County veterans who have provided an invaluable service to our nation. While providing service, some have suffered the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, mental health conditions, or substance use disorders, leading to contact with the criminal justice system. This voluntary program is for veterans charged with felony or misdemeanor offenses. VTC is a highly structured intervention process for the treatment of eligible participants that brings together substance use professionals, mental health professionals, VA professionals, and local service providers and requires intensive judicial monitoring.



In 2021, four applications for the VTC were assessed for eligibility but needed to meet the necessary risk level for the program. Recognizing the need to assist these individuals, the VTC team created a lower-risk track so that more veterans in the criminal justice system are eligible to participate. The low-risk track began during the summer, and we have accepted two individuals into the new track. We continue to serve those assessed at a higher risk level in their separate track.

In addition to connecting participants to needed treatment for substance use disorders and mental health conditions, the Kane County Veterans Assistance Commission and the Kane County Specialty Courts Foundation ensured that active participants had any special needs addressed and met throughout the year.

In August 2022, the Veterans Assistance Commission of Kane County, in cooperation with the US Department of Veterans Affairs and the 16th Judicial Circuit, hosted a training event for all law enforcement agencies within our county. The program included training for handling situations involving veterans and provided an introduction to our Veterans Treatment Court. VTC Coordinator Phil Wessel and Judge Marmarie Kostelny explained the purpose and operations of this problem-solving court and offered resources to local police departments.

# Facility Dog SPOTLIGHT

By Pam Ely

"Where is your dog?" has become my most common question daily. I am lucky to be one of the dog handlers for Forrest, the Kane County Facility dog that Judge Marmarie Kostelny applied for and was granted in 2017 by DUO Dogs. DUO Dogs is a nonprofit organization in St. Louis, Missouri, that trains and connects dogs with people to cultivate positive change in individuals, families, and communities.

If you have not had the privilege of meeting Forrest, he is an English lab, black in color with a boxy head and dark eyes. He is super adorable. Forrest spreads joy wherever he goes. You cannot "rush" when you are with Forrest. People will stop you to pet him, ask questions about him, and sit on the ground with him. He makes you slow down, relax, and interact with people you have never met.

I first met Forrest when Judge Kostelny asked if I would be interested in being a dog handler for a facility dog. I immediately said yes. I had to complete a five-day training program at the DUO Dogs facility. My idea of what it would be like and the reality of the training were very different. I imagined I would be playing with dogs and having a great time. The reality was the training was quite intense and structured. I learned I was not very "alpha" and had to "step it up" to be a dog handler. Forrest initially saw me as a friend and not a handler, but luckily, I passed the test. Accepting a facility dog is a serious commitment. Forrest technically belongs to the DUO dog group until he is 10 years old, at which time he can retire.

I am one of several "handlers" for Forrest at the Kane County Juvenile Justice Center. My official title is Mental Health Coordinator, and I work with incarcerated juveniles. Forrest is an enormous help to me at work. Someone recently asked me if Forrest is a pet or a coworker to me—I believe he is both. When I walk into a detention housing unit with Forrest, kids immediately greet us. They run up, hug him, pet him, sit on the floor with him, and talk to him. Kids naturally open up and talk when Forrest is around. I will ask the kids about their pets and tell them about Forrest.

When I explain that women trained him in a federal prison, kids are surprised and say, "He was locked up too?" They love to hear stories about how Forrest loves babies, bouncing balls, and anything that resembles food.



Occasionally I have to bring Forrest to the Kane County Judicial Center, where he is a huge celebrity. People greet him wherever I go. Sometimes I feel like I should answer for him by saying, "He is good. How are you?" But really, no words are needed. He is loved by everyone.

Forrest is a busy dog. Besides going to juvenile detention, he goes to drug court, mental health court, and veterans court. He will sit with children when they testify or are waiting to testify. Forrest is also a "therapy dog" for staff members at the courthouse. He lights up the room wherever he goes. People tend to think that they have a special relationship with Forrest. I think Forrest would agree with all of them. Some staff members keep dog toys or a dog bed in their office for Forrest. One boy in detention always says, "Forrest loves me so much- he misses me! He thinks I am special." Forrest does that for people.

# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit

## COURT ADMINISTRATION

### Court Administration Office



**Andrea O'Brien**  
Court Administrator



**Jason Mathis**  
Deputy Court  
Administrator

In November 2022, after more than 30 years of service, Court Administrator, Doug Naughton, retired. To fill his position, a national search was conducted with the help of the National Center for State Courts. Upon completion of the search, Andrea O'Brien, the current Deputy Court Administrator, was selected as the new Court Administrator. A national search was also conducted to fill the Deputy Court Administrator position, which resulted in the selection of Jason Mathis, a Pre-Trial Supervisor from Kane County Court Services. Under the direction of the Chief Judge, the Court Administrators of the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit are responsible for supervising the court's non-judicial staff and managing court operations.

The Court Administrators supervise staff at two courthouse locations. Staffing includes Bailiffs, Judicial Assistants, Staff Attorneys, OP Staff, Interpreter Staff, Jury Commission Clerks, Paralegals, and our Case flow Manager.

The management of court operations includes personnel management, fiscal/budget coordination, public relations, space and equipment/technology management, long-range planning, case flow management, jury management, management of our interpreter program, as well as oversight of our Law Library, Mandatory Arbitration, and our various court mediation programs.

The Office of the Court Administrator is dedicated to the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit's mission and vision, ensuring equal and timely court access while fostering public trust and confidence.

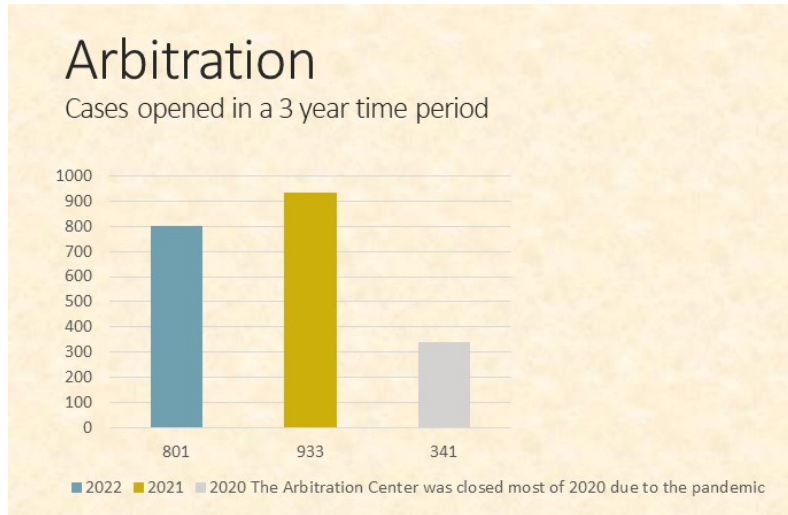
# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit COURT ADMINISTRATION continued

## Arbitration Center

### Mary Barnette

Arbitration Center Administrator

All civil actions exclusively for money damages that are filed in an amount not greater than \$75,000.00 are automatically assigned to non-binding mandatory arbitration. The day-to-day management of the program is the responsibility of the Arbitration Center Administrator.



## Bailiffs

### Nancy Hudson

Chief Bailiff Kane County Judicial Center

### Lan Nielsen

Chief Bailiff Kane County Courthouse

The Bailiffs of the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit help promote and encourage the public’s confidence and respect for the judicial system through their presence and behavior in the courtroom. They are responsible for maintaining order and decorum in the courtroom, ensuring that all orders from the bench are carried out.

In addition, when the court has jury trials, Bailiffs provide the first line of security and information to jurors. They keep jurors free from contact with anyone not authorized to be in their presence.

Outside of the courtrooms, Bailiffs provide public information, non-legal directions, and assistance accessing Zoom to parties, attorneys, and litigants.

# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit

## COURT ADMINISTRATION continued

### Children’s Waiting Room

**Ann Lobb**  
Director

The Children’s Waiting Room (CWR) is located on the lower level of the Kane County Judicial Center. The CWR provides supervised short-term childcare for children, ages infant to 12 years old, whose parents and or guardians are appearing in court. The CWR is staffed with 2-3 employees each day. The hours of operation are Monday – Thursday, 8:15 a.m. – 4:15 p.m., and Fridays from 8:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. In 2022, the CWR served 234 children while their parents and or guardians attended court.

### Jury Commission

**Mari Moore and Stacey Payne**  
Jury Commission Clerks

The Office of the Jury Commission is tasked with the preparation of the general jury list, summoning, selection, drawing, examination, and verification of persons for jury service. Illinois law requires that the names of prospective jurors be randomly drawn from a combined list of registered voters, Illinois Driver’s License holders 18 years of age and older, Illinois Disabled Persons Identification Card holders, Illinois Identification Card holders, and claimants for unemployment insurance.

In 2022, a total of **9,115** jurors were summoned for jury duty. There were **15** civil jury trials conducted at the Kane County Courthouse and **41** jury trials conducted at the Kane County Judicial Center.

### Mediation Programs

**Kevin Malone** Program Director | **Christina Wright** Eviction Mediation Program Coordinator

The 16th Judicial Circuit Mediation programs provide a confidential process in which a neutral mediator assists parties in reaching a mutually acceptable agreement. Mediation is intended to be a more informal and non-adversarial process where the mediator assists the parties in identifying issues, fostering joint problem-solving, exploring settlement alternatives, and reaching an agreement. The 16th Judicial Circuit has five Mediation Programs: Civil, Family, Residential Foreclosure, Eviction, and Child Protection.

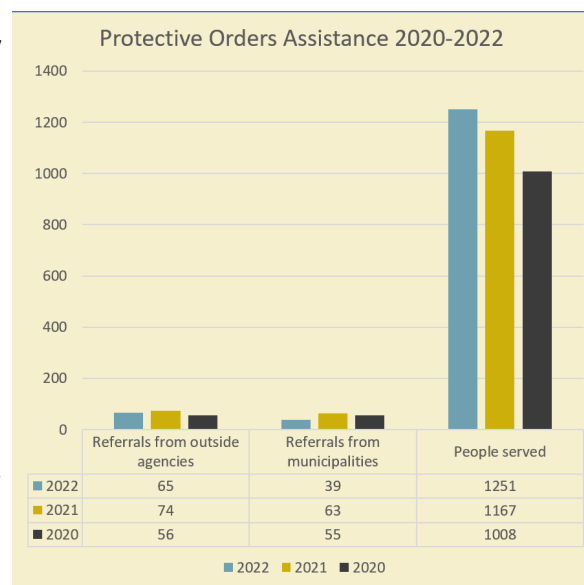
# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit COURT ADMINISTRATION continued

## Protective Orders

**Beth Williamson** Coordinator | **Mikaela Thorne** Clerk  
**Karen Zajicek, Brittany Moore,** and **Brittany Anderson** Staff Attorneys

The Sixteenth Judicial Circuit Court assists self-represented litigants with protective orders Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Kane County Judicial Center. In December 2022, the department was restructured with the hiring of an Emergency Orders of Protection (EOP) Coordinator and a Clerk. The EOP Coordinator and Clerk provide assistance with filling out petitions for filing Emergency Orders of Protection, Civil No Contact Orders, and Stalking No Contact Orders. The Staff Attorneys assist the Judge with completing orders during the plenary court call.

In total, the court assisted **1,251** petitioners seeking assistance with protective orders. Individuals who sought emergency protective orders came from a total of **65** different municipalities; **22** municipalities in Kane County and **43** municipalities outside of Kane County. A total of **39** different agencies, including police departments and victim advocacy agencies, referred Petitioners to the Court during 2022. Victim advocacy agencies included legal aid agencies, state agencies, health providers, and domestic violence shelters.



## Interpreting Services & Language Access

**Elizabeth Cull** Interpreter Coordinator | **Jazmin Nicacio** Assistant Interpreter Coordinator

The Sixteenth Judicial Circuit is committed to ensuring access to the judicial system for people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and people who are deaf and hard of hearing. The division staffs each courtroom with the highest quality interpreters; collects, analyzes and reports data regarding the languages being requested and maximizes the interpreting reimbursements provided by the Administrative Offices of the Illinois Courts (AOIC).

Partnering with the AOIC, the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit utilizes nine Supreme Court interpreters throughout Kane County courthouses and has five Supreme Court interpreters on a call list.

In addition, the interpreter division continues to implement and investigate new technologies in order to promote equal access to the judiciary for all members of our community.

While Spanish is the most frequently requested language, the division has also provided interpreters in court for the following languages: Creole, Dari, Farsi, Gujarati, Igbo, Kirundi, Pohnpeian, Urdu, and Yoruba

# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit COURT ADMINISTRATION continued

## Court Reporting Services

**By Jill Gasparaitis**

Court Reporter Supervisor

In June of 2022, due to the implementation of the SAFE-T Act, Court Reporting Services (CRS) requested an additional appointment of an official court reporter. The request was approved, and detention hearings regarding bond will now be an additional official record CRS will maintain for the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit. Currently, there are 19 full-time official court reporters and 2 per diem part-time official court reporters appointed by the State of Illinois to work in the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit.



In October 2021, CRS took on providing an official record for several civil courtrooms at the Kane County Courthouse in Geneva, Illinois, after the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts (AOIC) installed an electronic recording system. Over the past two years, the official court reporters have successfully transitioned to add to their duties the task of monitoring the recording of the chancery, civil, and probate courtrooms and providing transcription of the recordings. If a transcript is ordered, the time stamp of a proceeding is located, and the court reporter observes the proceedings and takes down the record on their steno writer. Transcripts assist the parties and their attorneys during the litigation process and provide an official record for appeal. Having an official record for these civil courtrooms has been well received, and the several hundred transcript orders since its inception reflect the welcome addition of having a record available. Soon, AOIC will begin installing electronic recording in Kane County Judicial Center courtrooms that do not currently have that capability.

Every year in February, the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit judges and other departments within the courthouse celebrate with the official court reporters National Court Reporter & Captioning Week. The official court reporters sincerely appreciate the recognition of their skills and responsibility of being the “guardians of the record.” Outside of the courtroom this year, some of our court reporters participated at high school job fairs to promote their profession, presented to Kane County attorneys the seminar, “Ensuring a Clearer Record,” and participated in the fall Kane County Judicial Center celebration for children of employees. In addition, our office has undertaken the tradition of the 3D snowflake creating and hanging display at the historic Kane County Courthouse in Geneva for the holiday season.

*In the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit, Court Reporting Services employees capture the verbatim record of the courtroom proceedings presented in the Felony, Misdemeanor, Juvenile, Specialty Court, and Mental Health courtrooms as well as oversee the monitoring and transcript production of the digital recording system in the Law, Chancery and Probate courtrooms.*

# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit Court Administration continued



**By Halle Cox**  
Director

## Law Library & Self Help Legal Center

The mission of the Kane County Law Library & Self Help Legal Center (KCLL) is to ensure equal and open access to the legal system. In furtherance of this mission, the Law Library staff strives to create informed legal consumers and empower court-goers by assisting them in using the legal system effectively and efficiently.

### Supporting Our Community

KCLL created and hosts such programs as the Divorce & Family Law Help Call-In Service, the Divorce & Family Law Walk-In Service, and Lawyer in the Library at the Gail Borden Public Library. KCLL works to bring volunteering attorneys together with those in the community who could most benefit from free legal guidance.

In 2022, KCLL created a new partnership with the Aurora Public Library to host Lawyer in the Library at the Aurora Public Library, further supporting the legal needs of those within our communities. In 2022, volunteering attorneys assisted 568 members of the public through these four programs.

Also, in 2022, KCLL partnered with the Kane County Bar Association, agreeing to act as the host site for their newly created Drivers' Privilege Clinic. Since it began in May 2022, the once-a-month clinic has provided drivers' license issue assistance to 25 people.

### Access to Justice

KCLL continues to be active in and benefits from the Illinois Supreme Court's push for stronger public access to justice. In 2022, KCLL applied for and was granted \$10,000 from the Illinois Su-

preme Court Access to Justice Commission and Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts to further efforts supporting self-represented litigants involved with Kane County courts. Due to this funding, Spanish language interpreters are now present at both the Gail Borden and Aurora Public Library Lawyer in the Library programs.

Halle Cox, Director of the KCLL, was again in 2022 named Self-Represented Litigant Coordinator for the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit (Kane County) and was invited to co-teach an Illinois Judicial Education Conference program, Self-Represented Litigants Best Practices and Tips for Assisting SRLs in the New Normal. Additionally, Cox was invited to co-present at the Court Administration Leadership Academy, as well as the First Judicial Circuit's program, Expanding Your Expertise Helping Self-Represented Litigants.

### Employee Recognition

The Kane County Justice Partners selected Librarian Ellen Schmid in 2022 as Team Leader for the Kane County Justice System Strategic Plan's Public Trust and Understanding operating committee. Additionally, she was chosen to co-Team Lead the Public Trust and Understanding, Social Media Plan, and Community Events operating committee.

### Illinois JusticeCorps

In 2022, the Illinois Bar Foundation extended the term of the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit JusticeCorps Fellow until the fall of 2023. The role of the Fellow is to help ensure positive court experiences for self-represented litigants. To this end, they work out of the KCLL and are overseen by the



# Librarian SPOTLIGHT



**Tiffany Montiel**  
Illinois  
JusticeCorps  
Fellow

Director. They assist people with e-filing, Zoom court, locating legal forms and resources, and creating plain language documents to guide self-represented litigants better.

### **Expungement Clinics**

The Kane County State's Attorney's Office, in partnership with the Kane County Sheriff's Office, the Kane County Circuit Clerk's Office, the Kane County Public Defender's Office, the Kane County Law Library & Self Help Legal Center, and local public libraries hosted the second series of Kane County Expungement Clinics. KCLL aided the program by garnering volunteer attorneys, creating an online volunteer sign-up portal, and acting as support at the events.

### **National Night Out**

KCLL had the pleasure of participating in the 2022 National Night Out hosted by the Kane County Sheriff's Office. The Director and Librarian staffed a table, handing out donated gently used children's books and speaking with parents about the Law Library's various resources.

### **Juvenile Justice Center**

KCLL, in partnership with the Juvenile Justice Center (JJC) and the St. Charles Public Library, re-instituted the JJC Book Club and the upkeep and support of the JJC Library. Services had been temporarily suspended to help ensure the health of those working and staying within the facility.



***Kane County Law Library &  
Self Help Legal Center  
Director, Halle Cox,  
receives the Jeffrey D. Colman  
Access to Justice award***

The Kane County Law Library's Director, Halle Cox, was presented in 2022 with the 2021 Jeffrey D. Colman Access to Justice Award by the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Access to Justice.

The award is presented to an individual who has made a significant or meaningful contribution to improving access to the civil court system for litigants who are self-represented, limited English proficient, disabled, or otherwise vulnerable.

# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit SPECIAL PROGRAMS

## Worries of the World Wide Web

Worries of the World Wide Web is a program that addresses the increasing problem of cyber bullying, electronic harassment, and sexting/pornography. The program is directed toward middle school students and speaks to the social and legal consequences of this potentially criminal behavior. The program is meant to increase the awareness of what cyber bullying, harassment, and sexting are and how it may impact the lives of those students who participate in this type of activity. Sixteenth Judicial Circuit judges Chief Judge Hull and Judge Boles created the program in response to middle school teachers expressing their students were being negatively impacted by the use of social media. During 2016-2017, the Illinois Judges Association worked with the Sixteenth Circuit Court judges to expand the program statewide.



### ***Praise for the Worries of the World Wide Web program from parents and educators***

Parent letter shared by **Tim Swade**, Student Support Coordinator (Dean) | Wredling Middle School:

*"I wanted to tell you how much I appreciated the fact that Wredling decided to assemble the 8<sup>th</sup> graders for the Judges Presentation. From the second our son got in the car that afternoon all he did was talk about it. He even met his father in the driveway when he got home from work and told him all about it. I can tell it made an impression on him and I think it gave him a perspective that he didn't necessarily have before that. He was shocked at how young some of the affected kids were and it led to some really good conversations at home, such as what the impact our actions have on other people that we may not realize.*

*I'm sure it can be difficult to decide what is and is not appropriate to expose kids to and no matter what someone is not going to be happy but for me personally **I'm thankful that you choose to do it.**"*

Letter shared by **Marie Legenski**, LRC/Media Specialist | Thompson Middle School

*"Thank you very much for volunteering your time to share the WOWWW presentation with Thompson Middle School students. The students were engaged and found it to be a powerful lesson that will serve them well as they continue to navigate making choices while growing up in today's world. We appreciate your flexibility moving forward with a virtual visit and look forward to seeing you again in person next school year!"*

# About the Sixteenth Judicial Circuit

## SPECIAL PROGRAMS continued

### School Visitations

Court facilities are available for in-circuit school field trips. These visits offer groups the opportunity to see firsthand the operations and inner workings of the many components of the justice system.

*"I just want to take a moment to thank you and all involved with making our field trip a great experience. Judges Yetter and Johnson, SA Moss-er, PD Conant and their assistants were exceedingly generous with their time and offered my class many valuable insights. Also, Judge Cruz's classroom was very interesting with seeing the DUI trial (although I don't think the defendant was too fond of us being there). I definitely plan on bringing students back next year and will remember to book it early. Thanks again!"*

V/R,

*Mike Huston  
Law Enforcement Instructor  
Fox Valley Career Center*



### Mock Trials

The Sixteenth Judicial Circuit, in conjunction with the Kane County Bar Association and St. Charles North High School, annually host a high school Mock Trials competition. The Mock Trials allow stu-



dents the opportunity to present cases in a courtroom and in front of Sixteenth Judicial Circuit judges. For the past several years, the Judicial Center has also been a host site for the American Mock Trial Association's opening championship round. This college mock trial tournament hosts about two dozen teams from around the country and provides a full weekend of mock trial competitions.

# Special Programs

## ***Kane County Judges Return to Class with Insightful Lesson about Teens Misuse of Social Media*** By Julie Mann

As the new school year begins, so does an important student-oriented program about the real-life consequences of sending a text, posting on social media or sharing a video. Misuse of technology can lead to criminal charges, a permanent record or in the most extreme circumstances, loss of life.

Those issues are addressed in a statewide program developed by two Kane County judges. The hour-long presentation, ‘Worries of the World Wide Web’ is geared towards students in middle school and takes an eye-opening look into the potentially criminal and sometimes devastating after effects of cyber bullying, electronic harassment and sexting/pornography.

“What students need to understand is the moment they press send on social media, they lose control over what they just sent,” said Hull. “The text or picture, which they thought was private, can be forwarded, posted, and/or shared with anyone on the internet. The end result is that “private” picture or text just became available to everyone online.”

The origins of the program stem from concerns middle school teachers shared with Kane County Judges Susan Boles and Clint Hull about the harmful repercussions’ students were dealing with because of social media. Boles and Hull set out to create a narrative with students, using real life examples of what may seem to be private texts, pic-

tures and video that actually weren’t. The students are confronted with the reality of how their actions could land them in the court system, no matter what their age, and what that could mean for them years later as adults. ‘Worries of the World Wide Web’ has been updated to include the most recent social media applications, examples of ways teens are hiding their interaction online from adults and new or revised laws governing the abuse of technology.

“Judge Hull and I have seen the devastating results that can happen to a young person because of one bad decision,” said Judge Boles. “If we can get these students to think, ‘Wow, that could be me or I didn’t realize what could really happen because I forwarded a picture or a text’ then we have taken the first steps in changing a young person’s understanding about how action leads to accountability.”

The ‘Worries of the World Wide Web’ also addresses the alarming ties between social media, specifically cyberbullying, and teen suicide. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), suicide is the third leading cause of death in younger people ages 15-19 years.

This article originally appeared in  
*Kane County Connects* 8/23/2022

<https://kanecountyconnects.com/article/KaneCounty-Judges-SocialMedia-Students-Families>

# Looking Ahead to 2023



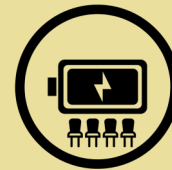
Implementation continues for second year of the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan



Renovations to the Family Division (Room 149) to better serve those seeking Orders of Protection



Installation of an electronic recording control room for the Family Law Division in the Judicial Center



Modernizing the cafeteria to include new furniture with charging stations



Utilizing **\$6 million** in grant monies to enhance courthouse technology in 16th Circuit facilities



Awaiting the final ruling of the Illinois Supreme Court on implementing the Pretrial Fairness Act expected 2023



Election of a new Chief when Chief Judge Hull's term ends in 2023  
late 2023



Kane County seeks to have the Diagnostic Center receive accreditation