



## Being a presiding judge requires vision, energy

When Judge Karen Adam became a presiding judge, she was thrilled because it was her “dream job.” Since taking over the position, she’s been given the chance to carry on the work of those who preceded her, but it’s also given her the opportunity to try out her own ideas.

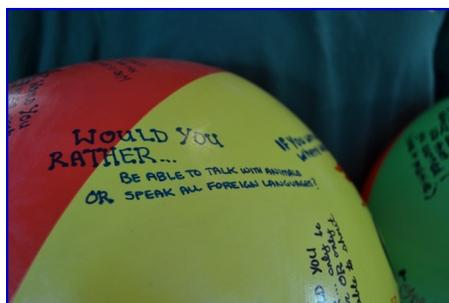
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Check out these other stories in this month’s bulletin:



Our year-end statistics are in. Court Administrator Stephen Rubin is pleased with our staff’s efforts.

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More than 1,700 children have gained a lot of insight about themselves in the Make a Change program.

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A long-time relationship creates positive outcomes for court-involved children.

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## Drugs, alcohol things of the past for kids who Make A Change

Eight years ago, a group of people at Pima County Juvenile Court realized they were missing an opportunity.

A fair amount of the kids in custody were abusing drugs and alcohol, but addressing their issues was difficult because they were scattered throughout the Detention Center.

Suddenly, a brainstorm. Why not house all of the kids in one living unit and create a program just for them?

In August 2007, the Make A Change program for boys was created with the help of detention staff, probation officers and administrators. Two years later, the girls' version began.

Since that time, nearly 1,700 teenagers have participated in what is commonly referred to as the "MAC" program. It is a three to 14-day treatment readiness and relapse prevention program.

They spend most of their day in school, but their afternoons and evenings are devoted to substance abuse programs and group education sessions. They learn about such things as refusal skills, decision making skills and other ways to prevent relapses.

Once a week they participate in family sessions. Individual sessions are offered on an as-needed basis. On the weekends, two members of Narcotics Anonymous take turns holding meetings.

Some MAC participants leave the detention center for in-patient treatment centers. Others leave and participate in out-patient treatment and/or the PCJCC's Youth Recovery Court.

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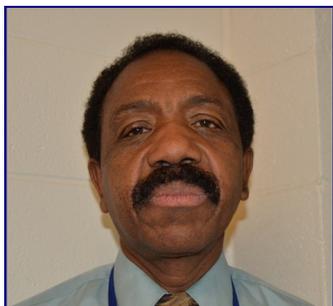


Clinician Alvin Lewis listens as a MAC unit juvenile detention officer questions the kids as to what they learned during a recent lesson.

The hope is that the MAC program will prepare the kids for the challenges ahead of them.

Typically, children are referred to the program by a judge or probation officer, but they can refuse to participate. Those who want to take advantage of the program must be screened and accepted by Lead Probation Officer Paula Burns.

Those accepted into the program must have expressed a desire to change. In addition, boys must be at least 15 and girls at least 14.



**"It's not just about getting clean and sober. It's about having a new attitude and new lifestyle" — Alvin Lewis, clinician**

"Twelve and 13-year-olds aren't ready to change," said clinician Alvin Lewis. "They aren't sick and tired yet."

Lewis is one of three clinicians in the program. The author of several books and a college instructor, Lewis earned his master's degree in social work and his doctorate in child development.

He likes to tell the kids that he's not an expert in using drugs; he's an expert in not using drugs. He also tells them about a former student who lost two wives, a house, numerous jobs and his freedom because of his drinking. The man killed someone in an alcohol-related crash.

"I tell them that I want to help them at 15 so that at 40 years of age that isn't their life," Lewis said.

At 15 it's hard to envision never using substance again, but Lewis urges the kids to take life one day at a time.

"It's not just about getting clean and sober," Lewis said. "It's about having a new attitude and new lifestyle. I tell them they've got to change people, places and things in their lives."

Paula Burns, the lead probation officer, jumped at the opportunity to get involved in the MAC program. She'd already been with the courts more than 20 years in 2007 and was excited at the opportunity to help build a program from the ground up.

Working with the kids in the detention center is much different than working with them in the field, Burns said.

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“You get to know them as a person,” Burns said. “You can help them more directly. You’re here five days a week, eight hours a day so you’re basically living with them.”

“I always tell the kids I’m not here to judge them, I’m here to help them,” Burns said.

At 15, 16 years of age, many also don’t understand what they choose to do today will impact their lives in the future, Burns said. The probation officers, juvenile detention officers and clinical staff who work with them try to teach them their choices do have an impact.

The kids who succeed in the MAC program are those who have made a commitment to try to change, Burns said.

“Cutting their ties with their friends is often the hardest thing for them to do,” Burns said. “Friends are very influential and they don’t want to be left out. They want to belong.”

In fact, some participants in the program were kicked out during an earlier stay and have asked to be accepted back into the program after violating their probation, Burns said.

Because having a strong support network is also essential, the MAC program also invites parents to meet as a group with the clinicians.

During those sessions, the parents talk about similar experiences they’ve had with their children and they share their hopes for the future, Lewis said.

“What I like is that all of a sudden we’ve got parents interacting across racial and socio-economic lines; they talk about the pain they felt the first time the police were called or the child’s probation officer was called,” Lewis said. “They get validation about what they are thinking and feeling and I think that’s very important.”

Burns said that even if a child isn’t quite ready to make the changes they need to, they might remember something they learned in the MAC program at some later point.

“I definitely think we are planting seeds,” Burns said.

## Make a Change Program

### 2012 Statistics

- ◆ 201 unique participants
- ◆ 69% boys
- ◆ 31% girls
- ◆ Average age - 16
- ◆ 53% had a mental illness diagnosis
- ◆ 84% successfully completed program

Source: Pima County Research & Evaluation Specialist Julie Kudrna

## The role of the presiding judge is complex, diverse

The little boy in the three-piece blue suit was quite emphatic. Undaunted by the formality of the adoption proceedings, he interrupted and announced to one and all that since his name was changing, his buddy Rudolph needed his name changed too.

Not missing a beat, Pima County Juvenile Court Judge Karen Adam declared she had the authority to grant the motion. From that day forward, Judge Adam announced, the 5-year-old and his stuffed reindeer will share the same last name.

Moments later, she granted a request from a 2-year-old who wanted her unicorn, Twilight Sparkle, to share her name, too.

Judge Adam graciously accepted the effusive thanks of the children's new parents, but told them it was she who was grateful to them.

"You provided these kids with exactly what they needed when they needed it," Judge

Adam said for the record. "It is absolutely in their best interests to be adopted by you."



Presiding Pima County Juvenile Court Judge Karen Adam explains to some visitors how she always invites children to take advantage of a huge drawing pad in the hopes they'll feel more comfortable in the courtroom.

Moments later, the little ones and their new siblings were climbing into the judge's chair for photos as the judge exchanged hugs with the rest of the family.

It was already past 5 o'clock, but the judge wasn't quite done with her day. She returned to

her office, ruled on two motions and caught up on her emails.

For the past three years, Judge Adam has been Pima County Juvenile Court's presiding judge. In addition to carrying a caseload of child welfare and delinquency cases, presiding judges deal with personnel and budget issues, policies and procedures.

Often, they are also visionaries who guide those around them toward their goal.

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Judge Adam likes to think of herself as a “big picture” person. When other teenagers were sleeping in or hanging out with friends back East, she was tutoring and visiting patients in state hospitals. In college, she volunteered at impoverished elementary schools, at summer camps for disabled children and at the YMCA.

She knew she was destined to work for the disadvantaged, but it wasn't until she met one of Tucson's best known defendants that she decided to enter the criminal justice field.

Judge Adam was working for former Pima County Public Defender Howard Kashman when he invited her to tag along on a visit to Louis Taylor, who was serving 28 life sentences after being convicted of setting a fire that killed 29 people at the Pioneer Hotel on Dec. 20, 1970.



Presiding Juvenile Court Judge Karen Adam addresses staff during the first-ever employee recognition event. She describes the atmosphere at the PCJCC as “very collegial.” The judges themselves are “unbelievably energetic and engaged.”

Taylor, who has always maintained his innocence, was set free in April 2013. He had been granted a new trial, but prosecutors agreed to give him a time-served sentence if he pleaded no contest.

Judge Adam became a public defender following her meeting with Taylor. Eventually, she became a city magistrate and then a commissioner who spent time on the juvenile, probate and family law benches.

In 2010, Judge Adam became a Superior Court judge when she was appointed by Gov. Jan Brewer. The following year, she was appointed the presiding juvenile court judge by Presiding Pima County Superior Court Judge Sally Simmons.

The position of presiding judge is her “dream job,” Judge Adam said. Becoming the presiding judge gave her the opportunity to carry on the work of those who preceded her, but also provided her the chance to try out her own ideas. (Contd. Page 7)

Since the 1960s, the PCJCC has had a national reputation for its progressiveness. Its judges were among the first to stop locking up runaways. Judge Lillian Fisher established the state's first Court Appointed Special Advocates program and the court was among the first in the nation to work on disproportionate minority contact (DMC) and the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI).

*"If you say 'child' your minds goes to a different place. You will likely be more open, more compassionate, more concerned," — Judge Adam*

When Judge Adam became the presiding judge, she was determined to keep up the momentum on the court's DMC/JDAI work, but she also wanted to make the court more cohesive and to build upon

the strong relationships the court already had with its community partners – the school districts, Tucson Police Department, CPS, service providers and churches.

Instead of focusing on child welfare cases and juvenile justice cases independently of one another, Judge Adam brought everyone into the same room because no matter how children end up in court, they are struggling with the same issues -- trauma, domestic violence, mental illness, etc.

Judge Adam calls it the "One Court" concept and every year the One Court Steering Committee sets goals and creates work groups. They then gather over lunch monthly to discuss their progress, share resources and talk about what else is going on within their respective agencies.

"I want people to remember that we are all guided by the same core principles and the same commitment to children and to the safety of the community," Judge Adam said. "I want people to remember that nobody is less important and that it's a continuum, whether its detention, probation, child welfare, county attorney or public defender, it's all a piece."

Juggling 500 staff members, dozens of community partners and county officials is exciting, challenging and time consuming, Judge Adam said.

Luckily, she doesn't need much sleep. She wakes up between 4 a.m. and 5 a.m. every day and goes through her emails first thing. She also goes for walks or does yoga most mornings.

"I think. I think all of the time when I'm walking," Judge Adam said.

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“I always make sure I walk on a day when I’m planning or giving a speech...my thoughts come together. I can get rid of the stress and I can get rid of anxiety and I get those endorphins going.”

She then spends the next couple of hours at home doing research, reading case files and preparing notes. She finds it easier to start at home without the distractions of drop-by visitors and ringing telephones.

If she’s not conducting hearings, she’s preparing for hearings, in meetings, catching up on the 60 to 80 emails she receives daily or issuing written rulings. It’s rare when she doesn’t have a lunch meeting. When she doesn’t, she eats in the office and takes a 10-minute “power nap.”

By the time she re-named Rudolph and Twilight Sparkle, she’d already put in a 12-hour day.

Whether she’s in her office or her courtroom, Judge Adam has vivid reminders of the children she’s serving.



Judge Adam accepts a gift from a Kazakhstan judge who came to learn about our child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Her desk’s bulletin board is a collage of children who were or are on her caseload. In her courtroom, Bearister the Bear sits in one corner. In another is a bookcase filled with books for all ages and crayons, earrings, nail polish and other do-dads she urges children to take with them when they leave. Nearby is an easel and huge drawing pad filled with colorful drawings from the children on her caseload, half a dozen filled pads are

stashed nearby. “I love you. I’m going to miss you!” are scribbled on several.

Dealing with budget woes and hearing stories of abuse and neglect is obviously difficult, but they are balanced by the many, many success stories she gets to hear, Judge Adam said.

She’s happiest when “anyone, of any age, and in any kind of case, makes a change that helps them live a life they are happier with. That can be getting sober, reuniting with parents, getting a GED... I am happy when they are happy and moving forward, and it’s based on their standards, not mine.” (Contd. Page 9)

Judge Adam is especially proud of the fact she stopped children accused of crimes from being shackled during their court appearances. That being the case, it's probably not surprising she intensely dislikes the words "criminal" and "youth."

"Criminal" is too judgmental and "youth" is too impersonal, she explains.

"Using terms such as these allow people to detach from the person you're dealing with," Judge Adam said. "If you say 'child' your minds goes to a different place. You will

likely be more open, more compassionate, more concerned. It doesn't mean being a sap – it means thinking differently."

*"A lot of people haven't had exposure to the families we're dealing with. If you've never done any volunteer work with an agency that serves a population that's struggling economically or you've never lived in a part of town that isn't affluent, you might not have a clue about how people are living," Judge Adam said.*

When Judge Adam first became a commissioner, she felt undertrained and overwhelmed. When she became presiding judge, she vowed to make sure judges new to juvenile court had all of the tools they needed to perform their jobs well.

Well-trained judges are able to spend less time making sure the statutory requirements have been met and more time on the children

and their specific needs, Judge Adam said.

Well-trained judges also know about the latest studies, programs and trends.

"A lot of people haven't had exposure to the families we're dealing with. If you've never done any volunteer work with an agency that serves a population that's struggling economically or you've never lived in a part of town that isn't affluent, you might not have a clue about how people are living," Judge Adam said. "It's not that you can't get it pretty quickly by reading about it, but if you've never been exposed to it, then it's one more thing you have to learn in addition to everything else."

It's not just judges who need to attend trainings, Judge Adam said. She encourages attorneys and all of her court staff to attend as many trainings as possible, whether they are brown-bag lunches offered by the county or

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national conferences.

Her biggest passion right now is turning the court into a “trauma responsive” court.

One of the One Court Steering Committee’s goals last year was for the PCJCC to become trauma informed and trauma responsive.

Study after study has shown people who, as children, suffered the loss of a parent, witnessed domestic violence or been maltreated are far more likely to abuse substances and commit crimes, including child neglect and abuse.

By identifying and addressing trauma as early as possible, Judge Adam and other experts are convinced society can reduce the number of people who become court involved.



Judge Adam has long made it a practice to celebrate the 18th birthdays of children who reach that milestone while in the child welfare system.

Over the past year or so, Judge Adam has sought to educate court staff and community partners about trauma by bringing in experts, holding brown bag discussions and conferences and sending people to trainings.

She also asked a group of trauma experts to evaluate the court’s policies and procedures hoping we can mitigate whatever trauma they experience

when coming to court. Their report is due shortly.

You can’t expect everybody to know everything about everything, but if a courtroom is filled with educated professionals, the hope is someone will spot something so it can be addressed, Judge Adam said.

Adam’s core belief is that people can change, if given the proper tools.

She’d like to be remembered as someone who cared about everyone and carefully considered thoughtful discussions from all sides before making decisions.

“(I hope people remember me for) always seeking a better way to do what we already do well, and never, ever giving up,” Judge Adam said. “The day I stop believing in the ability of people to change their lives, that’s when I have to retire.”

## Behind the scenes team keeps court moving forward

If you were to think of the court system as a play, chances are you would think in terms of important roles -- the judge, the jury, the defendant, the attorneys and the research specialist.

The research specialist? OK, probably not, but the fact is research specialists play a huge, albeit behind-the-scenes role at Pima County Juvenile Court.

Roughly 26 percent of the court's \$32.3 million budget comes from grants and state funds. Every year, courts across the nation scratch and claw to win grants and get state funds. They must prove their programs are worthy of being funded.

Some courts expect department heads to gather the data they need for their grant applications, others have their IT departments do so and still others hire outside firms.

Pima County Juvenile Court is unique in that it has a five-member Research and Evaluation Unit.

The team is continually on the hunt for innovative programs that have been proven



to work. They are also constantly evaluating the court's existing programs to make sure they are effective.

Beverly Tobiason, the court's clinical director, has nothing but praise for the unit. Members of the unit routinely evaluate the Make a Change program, a substance abuse treatment readiness program.

The unit discovered that a part of the MAC program was actually tied to an increase in recidivism.

Youth Recovery Court is just one of many programs the court's Research and Evaluation unit is monitoring to ensure its effective.

“After reviewing these results, we replaced that part of our programming,” Tobiason said. “Without the program evaluation processes in place, we likely would have continued with the programming as a community-based best practice.” (Contd. Page 12)

Whether it's on the child welfare side or the juvenile justice side, the unit is committed to making sure Pima County retains its reputation for being on the cutting edge.

"Our court attracts people who really want to make a difference and they see that if we can intervene at this stage (in a child's life), we can really make a difference," said psychologist Joanne Basta, who heads the unit.

**Roughly 26 percent of the court's \$32.3 million budget comes from grants and state funds.**

Creating such a unit shows the court values data and information -- information they can use to create the best programs available, Basta said.

Sometimes people who are so passionate get lost in the day-to-day and having a research and evaluation unit to constantly look at the big picture shows foresight, Basta said.

Last year, the court received a second, three-year grant to try to reduce the number of children of color who are court-involved. Statistics show they are over-represented on both the juvenile justice and the child welfare sides of the court.

It's the Research and Evaluation Unit's responsibility to coordinate and evaluate the project. Considering the fact the court and its community partners are in the process of implementing nearly 90 recommendations, it's no easy feat.

The unit is also in the process of evaluating 12 juvenile justice programs. The programs include those that were implemented as alternatives to detention and those relating to education and employment. They are also looking at detention center programs, a residential therapeutic program and the court's Youth Recovery Court.

Their world consists of evaluation plans, data collection tools, spreadsheets, databases, case studies, focus groups, interviews, report writing and meeting after meeting. They work hand-in-hand with the court's IT unit.

The court routinely receives calls from frustrated parents who want to put their child into a military-style boot camp or to arrange for a tour of the detention center so they'll be "scared straight." Studies gathered by the research and evaluation team proves those types of programs don't work -- that they aren't "evidence-based."

It's the unit's job to find only those programs that are "evidence-based."

It is Basta's hope that one day the unit will be able to develop a training program so that others in the court will understand how to identify good research and evaluations and how to incorporate proven or "best" practices into their own work.

## Unique partnership leads to better outcome for kids

Pima County Juvenile Court is constantly hosting visitors from around the world and nation because of its reputation for implementing innovative, cutting edge and evidence-based programs.

Whether it's the court's judges, department heads, research and evaluation staff or line-staff, the court is always on the look-out for programs that will improve outcomes for the children who come through its doors.

Before programs can be created, however, courts need to understand those they serve.

Luckily for us, we're in Wildcat country.

Seven years ago, Pima County Juvenile Court, Tucson Unified School District and the University of Arizona's Educational Psychology Department agreed to embark upon a unique journey together. The three agencies fought past several hurdles so they could come together for the greater good and share data about our community's children.

The result is a database of 12,000 and growing children who have gone through our detention center. The database, which is stripped of the children's names to protect their privacy, collects each child's age, ethnicity, offense history, special education history, academic achievements, AIMS scores and disciplinary history. It shows if the child has been involved with CPS and if they receive a free or reduced lunch at school.

The database is a great tool for the court on a few levels, said Beverly Tobiason, PCJCC's clinical director.

"Research generated from the database allows us as a court to better understand, thus better serve our high needs children," Tobiason said. (Contd. Page 14)



Thanks to its partnership with the UA and TUSD, the PCJCC has a firm grip on the many educational and mental health challenges our court-involved children have, allowing them to create programs to better address those issues.

“The research also allows us to contribute nationally to other courts, schools, and to help other court-involved children through the professional research generated.”

It's the only database of its kind in the nation and the information that can be gleaned from it is nowhere near being exhausted, said UA psychologist Kristin Thompson.

So far, researchers have given 10 presentations based on various analysis of the information.

In fact, UA researchers will be appearing before the American Psychological Association in Washington, D.C. in August to talk about foster children who are also involved in the juvenile justice system.

In addition, four articles have been or are about to be published in peer-reviewed psychological, educational or criminal justice-related periodicals, Thompson said.

At least four doctorate students have also written their dissertations based on the database, Thompson said.



Too often, children who are involved in the child welfare system end up becoming involved in the juvenile justice system as well. By addressing their needs early on, the court hopes to stop that trend.

The UA's relationship with the court extends even further.

As of April 2013, Thompson and three doctoral students have been performing neuropsych evaluations on court-involved children whose parents have given permission.

When performing the 90-minute evaluation, the researchers measure IQs, memory, attention, impulse control, problem solving skills and basic learning skills.

By evaluating these children, Thompson and court officials believe the courts will be able to better judge which community programs will help children succeed.

For example, many children are referred to anger management classes, but those classes assume every child has a good attention span, can reason logically, has good verbal skills and a good memory, Thompson said. (Contd. Page 15)

If the evaluation shows the child has a problem in any of those areas, a different approach can be taken, Thompson said.

"We are seeing what we expected when it comes to memory, their memories are very, very poor, but they've done better than expected when it comes to problem-solving," Thompson said.

Thompson, two graduate students and a post-doctoral resident have also been conducting psychological/psychoeducational evaluations on children since August.

While neuropsychological evaluations look at how well children think, their memories, attention spans and intelligence, the psychoeducational evaluations are much more comprehensive and individualized. They look at a child's cognitive functioning, how well they are doing in school and their mental health.

Thanks to Thompson and her team, the court can now count on more evaluations being done. Prior to August, only a limited number of evaluations could be done. The court's clinical psychologist, Gustavo Perez, sometimes had to ask Phoenix-area doctors to travel to Tucson to perform them.

The more comprehensive an evaluation is, the better able to identify and address a child's needs, Thompson said.

For example, without a psychoeducational evaluation, one might assume a child who didn't want to go to school was learning disabled when, in fact, he might be suffering from social anxiety, Thompson said.

That child might best be served by therapy and an individualized education plan that included home-based services.

Tobiason, the court's clinical director, said the court is fortunate because the research that has been generated has been based on our actual community children.

"The various evaluations help us advocate for more effective educational and mental health interventions based on the individualized needs of a child," Tobiason said.

Thompson said Tucson's children are lucky to have such progressive leaders watching out for them.

"The court is so far ahead of other places," Thompson said. "They want to spend the time and the money to do more comprehensive evaluations. They are letting the research influence what they do rather than going off habit.

They are constantly wanting to change and do better," Thompson said.

## Stats show probation, mediators deserve kudos

The number of Pima County children who are brought through our doors by law enforcement officers continues to drop, but the number of children being neglected and abused remains at an all-time high, recently released statistics show.

According to Pima County Juvenile Court statistics, 1,329 dependency petitions were filed in 2013, a 9 percent decrease over 2012. While 9 percent would normally be considered a significant decrease, when one takes into account there was a 49 percent increase between 2011 and 2012, the decrease isn't as meaningful, said Chris Swenson-Smith, director of Children and Family Services.

At the end of 2011, there were 2,732 children in the foster care system in Pima County. At the end of last year, there were 3,883, an increase of 42 percent.

There are some positive numbers to share, however.

When the court began to see the huge increase in dependency cases, officials were afraid that a huge backlog of cases would develop. In fact, the court has done a great job in keeping up, Swenson-Smith said.

Just over 1,300 cases opened last year, but more than 1,400 were closed. In addition, the percentage of cases in which children were reunited with their parents increased 5 percent over 2012 and the number of children who aged out of the system decreased by 1.6 percent.

"Those are two of the hallmarks we check to make sure that kids aren't falling through the cracks," Swenson-Smith said. (Contd. Page 17)



The number of families reuniting increased last year, thanks, in part, to programs like Family Drug Court. The family above was one of them.

“We also look at the time it takes to close cases and the number of days in all categories fell.”

Swenson-Smith attributed the reunification numbers to the court’s use of best

**“Frankly, I think it’s miraculous we’ve been able to keep up and to stay within the legal timelines,” said Stephen Rubin.**

practices like Family Drug Court, Mediation, and Court Appointed Special Advocates, to the additional resources allocated by court administration to the Children & Family Services Division. She also remarked upon the dedication of the judges, attorneys, case managers and treatment providers who didn’t allow the increased caseloads to

affect their work or the families.

For example, Swenson-Smith said, the four mediators saved judges’ valuable time by mediating nearly 2,000 cases. They saw a 15 percent increase in their caseloads.

“Frankly, I think it’s miraculous we’ve been able to keep up and to stay within the legal timelines,” said Court Administrator Stephen Rubin. “Our judges do extraordinary work in this area. They are the busiest judges. They are in court everyday all day working on these cases. And, if it weren’t for the work of our mediators, we’d come to a grinding halt. They really do great work.”

On the juvenile justice side of the court, we saw a 17 percent decrease in the number of delinquency petitions filed, a 25 percent decrease in the number of children on probation and a 33 percent decrease in the number of children who met the criteria needed to book them into the detention center.

Specifically speaking, 998 children were detained throughout 2012 in our detention center. Last year, 671 children were detained.

Those numbers prove programs developed by the court – programs designed to hold children accountable without locking them up – work, Rubin said.

“That’s a very high success rate,” Rubin said. “It shows that children are coming into diversion, doing their contract and not coming back.”

If diversion wasn’t working, we would not have seen the number of delinquency petitions drop from 3,561 in 2012 to 3,014 in 2013, Rubin said.

## Supervisor Elías honored for his juvenile reform efforts

When the folks at the W. Haywood Burns Institute created the Courageous Leadership Award, President James Bell knew immediately who the first recipient should be.

“We wanted to honor folks who assist us in making a difference and the first person who should receive it, in my mind, was Richard Elías,” Bell said.

Elías is busy representing District 5 on the Pima County Board of Supervisors, but he is deeply committed to the Institute’s mission, Bell said.

The Burns Institute is a San Francisco-based national nonprofit that works with court officials, schools, political leaders, service providers and community groups to reduce racial and ethnic disparity.

About a decade ago, the PCJCC was the first court in the U.S. to simultaneously launch a juvenile detention alternative initiative and a disproportionate minority contact initiative. Officials did so with the help of the Burns Institute.

Elías has been involved since Day One.

“Richard doesn’t just send someone to our meetings, he sends himself,” Bell said.

Presiding Pima County Juvenile Court Judge Karen Adam was pleased for Elías.

“Richard Elías has been a tireless advocate for juvenile justice reform efforts at the Pima County Juvenile Court since 2003,” Adam said. “He has been a member of various steering committees and executive boards, and has supported our efforts to reduce both detention numbers and disproportionate minority contact.”

Not every court is as fortunate as Pima County Juvenile Court, Judge Adam said.

“It is extraordinary and unique that a member of the legislative branch plays such an important role in the Court’s policy development and strategies,” Adam said. “We are profoundly grateful for Supervisor

Elías’ commitment and congratulate him on this wonderful award.”

Elías, who went to Oakland, Calif. last



Richard Elías

month to receive the award, was gratified, but stressed he is just one of many working on juvenile justice reforms in Pima County.

Our judges are “unyielding” in their efforts to create alternatives to locking up children and to reduce disproportionate minority contact, Elías said.

He got involved with the initiatives at the urging of now-retired Judge Hector Campoy, Elías said.

Politicians may find spending whatever “political capital” they have intimidating, but it is well worth it, Elías said.

“Judge Campoy urged me to speak out. He understood the importance of it,” Elías said. “We’ve gotten our detention numbers down to where they are more appropriate, but there’s a lot of work that still needs to be done.”

“We’ve got to make people see that we can be more humane, that we have a chance to save these kids,” Elías said. “We can stop kids from continuing on and committing more crimes. The Burns Institute is leading the way and it’s been very, very good for all of us.”

## Destruction of records request forms now online

So, you've finally grown up. You are ready to move past the mistakes you made as a kid and you want to get a decent job. The problem is your past keeps following you.

Well, it's just become a little easier to ask a judge to destroy your juvenile court records.

Instead of having to come to court, people can now visit the Pima County Clerk of the Court's Office website at [www.cosc.pima.gov](http://www.cosc.pima.gov) to fill out the required forms.

Assistant Pima County Public Defender Leah Hamilton is pleased her clients now have an easier way to fill out the forms. Now her office is working to create a system that will allow them to remind former clients they have a right to have their records destroyed.

It's unfortunate, but Hamilton said many people have no idea they personally need to take steps to have their records destroyed. Some states keep juvenile records sealed, and destroy them when people turn 18, but Arizona does not.

Arizona judges will only consider destroying juvenile records if the person requests it and if certain conditions are met, Hamilton said.

The person has to have paid all of their fines and restitution, can't have any adult convictions and can't have any cases pending, Hamilton said.

Some juvenile records can be destroyed when the person is 18. Others can be destroyed only after the person has turned 25 or 30, Hamilton said. It depends on the seriousness of the crime.

Attorneys routinely tell their clients to ask for their records to be destroyed when they turn 18, but they often forget, Hamilton said. Her office has helped folks in their 30s fill out the packet of forms, she said.

Having a juvenile record can be a big deterrent when you are applying for jobs, Hamilton said.

"Since the military isn't in such dire need anymore, they are being much pickier nowadays," Hamilton said. "We've had clients who have been turned down when they've just been arrested, even though no charges were filed. We've also had cases where an expungement of the records wasn't enough and we've had to ask the judge to set aside the adjudication."

Once a month, an assigned judge will go over the requests. If granted, the judge will sign an order which is then mailed to the person making the request. Hearings are held once a month for those cases in which a prosecutor has filed an objection.

Prosecutors often object if they believe the person has met all of the requirements, but they think the facts of the case warrants keeping the case open to the public, Hamilton said.

According to the Pima County Clerk of the Court's Office, approximately 81 percent of requests have been granted over the last six years.

### Destruction of Juvenile Records

	Requests	Granted
2008	641	480
2009	671	560
2010	668	527
2011	696	564
2012	623	515
2013	519	431

# Odds & Ends

Our Community Renewal and Enrichment through Work folks received a big “Thank You” from the Sunland Gardens/Las Vistas Community Action Group earlier this month.

Community Service Coordinator Dave Stadle and the CREW kids spent several weekends cleaning up a vacant lot south of Sunland Vista in December and the organization expressed their appreciation in a monthly newsletter.

## Just a reminder...

If you are still committed to your New Year’s resolution to get back into shape, we offer Zumba classes in the 800 Detention Pod every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday between 12:10 p.m. and 1 p.m. The classes are \$5 each or \$10 per month. For security reasons, only employees who work or are housed at Juvenile Court can participate.



The Bravo team awarded one GEM this month. **Chris Vogler** from Probation was honored for “going above and beyond” when he helped Detention trainers get ready to attend the Train the Trainer Motivational Interviewing class in December.

## Upcoming Events

Thurs. Feb. 13, Youth Career Day

Fri., Feb. 14, Valentines Day

Mon., Feb. 17, Presidents' Day

## Milestones

Stevan Borozan, Probation, 15 yrs.

Richard Berkeley, Detention, 15 yrs.

Salvatore Calabrese, Probation, 20 yrs.

William Grijalva, Detention, 25 yrs.

# Voices

Since everyone at the PCJCC is here to help strengthen kids and families, it seems only appropriate that the kids in our Detention Center have a platform from which to speak. We'll be asking them questions periodically and printing some of their answers here.

**If someone paid for you to go to college, what would you study and why?**

I want to become a medical assistant or physical therapist. I love working with elders and I love to help people do stuff they are no longer capable of doing. My plan is to graduate college with a bachelor's degree.

**Alexis**

I would like to study genetics and DNA. I want to learn how cells and atoms work together and make the things that we have in this world. I plan to be a chemical genetic engineer. **Anonymous**

If someone paid for me to go to college I would study something to do with music producing.

**Abraham**

. I would want to study to be a Lawyer or a correction officer because I can relate to people and help the innocent people cuz I've been accused of something I didn't do in my past.

**Anonymous**

# Retirements



The PCJCC said goodbye to three longtime employees in January. Left Deputy Court Administrator Dodie Ledbetter gives Facilities Manager Ray Wood a piece of the original Mother Higgins detention facility. Below left, court reporter Eileen Livingston enjoys some cake and fruit punch. Below right, surveillance officer Louis Estrella spent 25 years at the PCJCC and he, too, received a brick from the Mother Higgins building.



## Digital calendar monitors up and running

Courthouse visitors will notice something different about the PCJCC lobby on their next visit.

As of Jan. 22, we have digital calendar displays up throughout our lobby.

Three monitors hang in the center of the lobby and show the name of the case, the time it starts, the courtroom and the judge's name, said Rona Newton, director of the court's Information Technology and Research Division.

Families who have a child going through the justice system will see the child's name posted, while families involved in a dependency case will see the mom's first name and last initial, Newton said.

Additional calendar displays hang approximately every four courtrooms, Newton said. There are also monitors hanging on both ends of the lobby that will eventually show videos about the court's various divisions and programs.

The monitors are between 40 and 60 inches in size.

"We want to make the information more accessible to people," Newton said. "It's a fairly simple project, but we believe it will be extremely helpful to our customers."



Mark McConnell from IT tests out our new calendar monitors.

### PCJCC Communications Bulletin

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