



# CSSD Chronicle

State of Connecticut Judicial Branch  
Court Support Services Division  
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## CSSD in the World: Training Future Leaders & Hosting International Exchanges

*"A leader is someone who helps improve the lives of other people, or improve the system they live under."* Sam Ervin, U.S. Senator from Texas, 1954-1974

This Chronicle will focus on recent CSSD activities that highlight our commitment to strengthen and develop leadership skills among our staff, and the outreach efforts undertaken by CSSD to share our expertise and experience to enhance systems in other places.

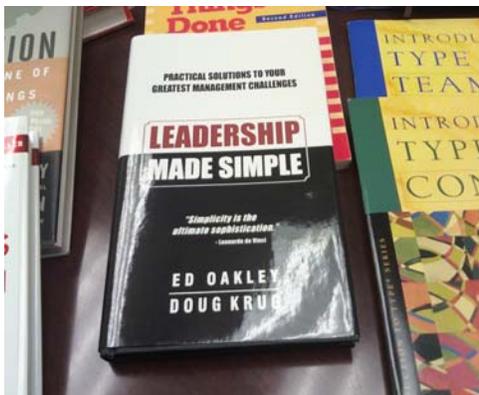
**Elm City Fellowship for Children and Families** – In October 2009, Melanie Rossacci, Court Planner II, who works for both Fiscal Administration and the Grants and Contracts unit, and Daisy Ortiz, Court Planner II within the Best Practices unit, began the nine-month *Elm City Fellowship for Children and Families*. The program model is designed to foster leadership within the New Haven area's nonprofit and public sectors and is funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and its direct service agency, Casey Family Services in New Haven.

The energy and enthusiasm for this executive training program is palpable when Rossacci and Ortiz talk about it. Both women were recommended through CSSD management for the fellowship but their place in the program was not guaranteed. The Casey Foundation required them to submit several essays, a professional resume and references, and also undergo a six-member panel interview before being accepted into the group of eight fellows.



**Melanie Rossacci and Daisy Ortiz**

Rossacci and Ortiz praised John Padilla, a Senior Associate for the Casey Foundation and lead faculty member, for his passion and commitment to "make the State of Connecticut a better place for children and families" through the fellowship. According to Rossacci, the program model is already being copied in other places, even though the fellowship is only in its second year.



Participants started the program with a two-day retreat, which gave them a chance to build professional and personal relationships with one another. Currently, participants meet for full-day sessions, twice a month. Ortiz commented on the amount of course materials and books that are required reading, and joked about the "heavy homework" required between sessions, but both women feel the extra work is time well spent.

Rossacci noted that the leadership skills she is acquiring are "building an internal capacity for leadership in any situation" and are not job specific. Ortiz agreed and added that the program has allowed her to step outside her role within CSSD and see human services issues from different perspectives. "This fellowship is providing a chance to learn new skills and build important relationships with outside community resources."

*More information can be accessed at*  
[www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org) or,  
[www.caseyfamilyservices.org](http://www.caseyfamilyservices.org).

**Yale Leadership Development Program in Behavioral Health** – In February 2010, Cynthia Theran, Assistant Director of Programs and Services for CSSD; Tasha Hunt, Regional Manager of Juvenile Services; and John Torello, Program Manager of Juvenile Clinical and Education Services began the 10-month *Yale Leadership Development Program in Behavioral Health* which focuses on the unique challenges facing middle managers as they work together to deliver community treatment services. The fellowship is sponsored by the Connecticut Workforce Collaborative on Behavioral Health (CWCBH), a grant-funded program that works in partnership with Yale University to train, support, and retain members of the Connecticut workforce who serve persons with mental health and substance abuse problems.

Eighteen professionals successfully completed the rigorous application and interview process of the Yale program—half are supervisors from community non-profit organizations and half are state-employed managers from DMHAS, DCF, and CSSD. Dr. David N. Berg, an organizational psychologist with special interests in group and inter-group relations, and a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the Yale School of Medicine, is the facilitator of the program.

Fellowship members met and got acquainted during a three-day retreat, held on the Yale University campus, in early December 2009. Led by Dr. Berg, the group immersed themselves in interactive, team-building exercises to clarify their individual roles and responsibilities within their service area, and help bridge communication between each other.

CSSD's John Torello spoke enthusiastically about Berg's unique curriculum. "It's not a stock PowerPoint, 'one-size-fits-all' lecture approach." According to Torello, the framework of the program is tailored to the issues facing those who are charged with delivering client services. Tasha Hunt agrees that the program is "not a 'Leadership 101' course" or a canned approach to organizational management. "We are the curriculum," Hunt said. "Future topics are expected to be fluid and based on real and relevant situations that are occurring right now in Connecticut, within our respective agencies."

The three-hour monthly sessions are divided into two sections. First, Berg facilitates an open discussion of professional issues or experiences brought to the meeting by the participants. The second half is devoted to continuing education in the form of guest speakers, presentations, or other material that help participants analyze and find solutions to the problems or concerns. Dr. Berg provides resource links and supplemental material that allow fellows to learn more about a particular topic of interest.

Cindy Theran echoed her colleagues' comments that the innovative program is rich with leadership information and team-building skills that have an "immediate sense of value and usefulness" and can be applied to current CSSD projects. Theran notes that the program teaches the dynamics of "fellowship" as well as leadership. "It is important to understand how we manage groups and the impact it has on our expectations of others," said Theran. "In order to lead well, we also need to know how to follow well."

For more information, go to the CWCBH website at [www.cwcbh.org](http://www.cwcbh.org).

### CSSD's Clinical & Educational Services Unit Hosts Russian Delegates

In October 2009, CSSD's Clinical and Educational Services (CES) unit hosted a delegation of Russian juvenile justice practitioners. The Library of Congress' Open World Program funded the trip. The delegation included attorneys, psychologists, professors and others who work with Russian youth in the Pskov and Archangel regions located near Moscow.

The week began with an introduction to the U.S. juvenile justice system by CSSD Executive Director Bill Carbone and CES Program Manager, Cathy Foley-Geib. A presentation was given (in very fluent Russian) by the Honorable Michael Sheldon who is a frequent visitor to Pskov. Information on CSSD's treatment services, which include Multisystemic Therapy (MST), Youth Enrichment Services (YES!), and Intensive In-Home Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services (IICAPS), was facilitated by program managers Julie Revaz and Kim Sokoloff.

As the week continued, the group toured Yale University and was hosted by CES consultant Dr. Elena Grigorenko, a Russian-American professor who is on faculty at both Yale and Moscow City University. A tour and a question-and-answer session were facilitated by Supervisor Jack Fitzgerald at the juvenile detention center in New Haven. The delegates also visited the New Haven Juvenile Court where a lively discussion about Connecticut's probation practices was offered by supervisors Karen Eaddy and Kate Gunning.



**Dr. John Chapman (front row, left) with Russian delegation**

Before returning to Russia, the delegation met with representatives of the American Psychological Association's NGO at the United Nations in New York City, and attended a seminar given by Dr. Julian Ford at the UConn School of Medicine's Trauma Clinic. The collaborative visit ended with an evening banquet where Open World certificates were awarded. Due to the success of the visit, there are plans to continue collaboration between CES and Russian representatives. ♥

For more information, contact Dr. John Chapman, CSSD Supervisor for Clinical & Educational Services at [John.Chapman@jud.ct.gov](mailto:John.Chapman@jud.ct.gov).



*The CSSD Chronicle is a regular publication of information and news about the Court Support Services Division. Questions or comments on this edition, or suggestions for future articles, can be directed to [Linda.Grzeika@jud.ct.gov](mailto:Linda.Grzeika@jud.ct.gov)*