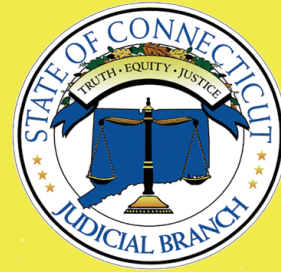


# CSSD Chronicle

State of Connecticut Judicial Branch  
Court Support Services Division  
Wednesday, July 20, 2011



## CSSD Employees Ed Battle and Denise Callahan Receive Liberty Bell Award on Law Day 2011



On May first of each year, state bar associations, judicial branches, and other community groups across the country celebrate Law Day with various activities that include award presentations to citizens and organizations that reflect a commitment to the rule of law and the fundamental principles of the U.S. Constitution. One of the honors is

the Liberty Bell Award which is given by local bar associations to an individual who promotes the understanding of the rule of law, encourages greater respect for the law and courts, stimulates a sense of civic duty, and contributes to good government in the community. This year, two CSSD staff members were among those who received this honor—New Britain Juvenile Probation Officer Edmond J. Battle, and Danbury Family Relations Counselor Denise Callahan.

CSSD Executive Director Bill Carbone congratulated both Battle and Callahan for receiving the award and remarked on their dedication to public service. “Every day, Ed and Denise work on behalf of our system of law and justice in their respective roles within CSSD. They are shining examples of who the Liberty Bell Award is meant to honor—those who uphold the rule of law for all citizens, without judgment or prejudice.”

**History of Law Day**—In 1958, United States President Dwight D. Eisenhower began the tradition of Law Day, a time for the nation to reflect on the importance and privilege of the rule of law. In 1961, the U.S. Congress passed a joint resolution declaring May first as the official date for the celebration. The theme of Law Day 2011 was *The Legacy of John Adams: From Boston to Guantánamo*.

John Adams was a prominent leader in the American colonial resistance to British parliamentary authority in 1770 when he agreed to defend eight British soldiers and their captain for the killing of five Boston civilians. Adams’ role in the “Boston Mas-

sacre” trials is seen as an example of adherence to the rule of law, and defense of the rights of the accused, even in cases when lawyers represent unpopular clients and become involved in matters that generate public controversy. There have been other noteworthy cases throughout U.S. history where the defense of the accused has been unpopular—from the 1846 “insanity” defense of William Freeman by William Seward, later Lincoln’s Secretary of State, to the representation by Michael Tigar and Brian Hermanson of Terry Nichols in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing case—and includes the more contemporary efforts by lawyers to represent Guantánamo detainees in the global war on terrorism.

**Battle’s long road to success**—The New Britain Bar Association voted to honor Ed Battle with the Liberty Bell Award for outstanding service by a non-attorney judicial employee. In his acceptance speech, with his wife Caroline by his side, Battle spoke candidly about the challenges he faced growing up in a Buffalo, New York housing project. Born to a drug-addicted mother and absent father, Battle talked about his journey from an angry, defiant young man who was in trouble with the law, to someone who found more constructive ways to deal with his anger and frustration with the help of a strong mentor, a detention counselor named Mr. Eve. With the support of Mr. Eve, Battle was able to attend an alternative high school and became a member and leader of the school’s basketball team. After graduation, he went on to attend Georgia State University, becoming the first in his



*CSSD Juvenile Probation Officer Ed Battle gives his acceptance speech after receiving the Liberty Bell Award on Law Day 2011*

family to graduate from college.

Battle told the audience about the start of his Judicial Branch career at the Hartford Juvenile Detention Center, “giving back to youth who were experiencing the same challenges I faced as a kid.” Battle then went on to describe his current position as a Juvenile Probation Officer, and his collaboration with the New Britain Police Department to identify known gang members, along with his membership in the New Britain Juvenile Review Board, the Prison to School Pipeline Initiative, and several other youth-centered programs. “The efforts of folks I break bread with are relentless,” said Battle “and they too are passionate about saving our children and communities.”

**Callahan’s life of law and public service**—Denise Callahan, a CSSD Family Relations Counselor in Danbury, has grown up surrounded by the rule of law and public service. The daughter of former Connecticut Chief Justice Robert Callahan, and the sister of Danbury Chief Probation Officer Patrick Callahan, Denise is a graduate of Boston College, where she majored in English and Philosophy, and was a key member of the varsity swim team. Denise was hired by the Judicial Branch CSSD Family Services in April 2004 as a Family Relations Counselor, and works with families and their children during marital/relationship dissolutions or separation. She is also involved in criminal aspects of a case when family violence is involved, providing level of danger assessments and making recommendations to the court for appropriate judicial action to ensure the safety of victims. Currently, Denise is working toward a Masters Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Western Connecticut State University. She is a member of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts, American Counseling Association, and the Connecticut Counseling Association.

The Danbury Bar Association keeps the identity of the Liberty Bell Award recipient confidential until the time of the presentation. According to Karla Troesser, Danbury Family Services Supervisor, Denise had no idea she was being presented with the award “until the very moment that Judge Susan Reynolds was midway through describing her” during the day’s ceremony. Denise graciously accepted her award in front of a large group of elementary school students who were in attendance at the Danbury courthouse for Law Day to learn about the judicial system. Although she did not have a prepared speech, Denise tailored her remarks to the children in the audience. She spoke of her role as a counselor, saying she understood how difficult it is to be a child, especially when adults in their lives may be struggling with tough, family issues. She advised them, “Even if you are dealing with things that are difficult, please remember that your situation will not be like this forever.” Denise encouraged the children to “think about what you might like to do when you are a grown-up [so] you can make your own life better. I did, and many of the grown-ups in this room did. You can, too.”



*CSSD Family Relations Counselor Denise Callahan with Danbury Family Services Supervisor Karla Troesser after receiving the Liberty Bell Award on Law Day 2011*

Congratulations to both Ed and Denise for receiving the Liberty Bell Award on Law Day 2011.

For more information on Law Day visit the websites for the [State of Connecticut Judicial Branch](#) and the [American Bar Association](#).

*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)*