



Report of the External Affairs Advisory Board

Background

The External Affairs Advisory Board was formed in November of 2008 to review the *Speakers Bureau, Seniors and the Law* and the Media Campaign for Public Education, which were three areas identified in the Public Service and Trust Commission's Implementation plan.

The members of the External Affairs Advisory Board are:

Judge Susan B. Handy, Chair
Judge Dennis G. Eveleigh
Judge Douglas S. Lavine
Judge Jane S. Scholl

The Board received staff assistance from:

Attorney Melissa A. Farley, Executive Director, External Affairs Division
Attorney Stephen N. Ment, Deputy Director, External Affairs Division
Rhonda Stearley-Hebert, Manager of Communications, External Affairs Division
James J. Senich, Manager of Communications, External Affairs Division

The Board met four times (on December 5, 2008, January 9, 2009, March 16, 2009 and April 27, 2009) and held two focus groups. The first focus group was held on January 9, 2009 to obtain input from judges who had participated in the *Speakers Bureau*, as well as judges who had not participated. The second focus group was held on February 6, 2009, with teachers, administrators and other education personnel to determine ways that the Judicial Branch can assist in educating the youth in Connecticut about the role and function of the courts.

The External Affairs Advisory Board decided at its first meeting to develop a comprehensive plan with specific action steps to educate the public, senior citizens, members of community organizations, students and members of the general public, about the role and function of the Connecticut Judicial Branch.

Summary of Recommendations

1. Discontinue the *Seniors and the Law* program, as most of the issues affecting seniors are not within the purview of the Superior Court.
2. Invite senior citizens to go to their local courthouse to observe proceedings and to meet with a judge.
3. As part of the *Speakers Bureau*, ask senior centers if they would like to have a judge come and address their group.
4. Suggest to Judge Paul Knierim, Probate Court Administrator, that the Probate Court consider taking over the *Seniors and the Law* program, as the topics discussed, for the most part, more closely relate to the Probate Court.
5. Publicize the availability of the *Speakers Bureau* to community organizations.
6. Develop a bank of resources such as statistics that are readily available for judges who are part of the *Speakers Bureau*.
7. Market the *Speakers Bureau* to the judges themselves.
8. Encourage judges to inform the *Speakers Bureau* whenever they speak to a community group and provide an e-mail form for them to do so.
9. Send an e-mail to all judges once a year asking them to provide External Affairs with information about the number of groups they spoke to, the topics that were addressed, where the engagement took place and their comments on how the event went.
10. Provide evaluation forms to the judges and to the community organizations each time that a judge addresses an organization.
11. Expand the *Speakers Bureau* to include family support magistrates and Judicial Branch employees.
12. Ensure that there are accurate Branch-wide statistics available about the number of judges and employees who speak to community organizations, and require the administrative divisions to inform the *Speakers Bureau* when employees speak to community groups.
13. Urge the Chief Justice and the Chief Court Administrator to continue their efforts to remind judges that speaking to the community is one of the most important ways to educate the public about what we do and who we are.
14. Recommend to the members of the Pre-Bench Orientation Committee that they inform new judges about the importance of the *Speakers Bureau* and in going out into the community.

15. Send a list of Judicial Branch publications to every public library advising them that these resources are available upon request.
16. Cultivate relationships with educational organizations, particularly those involving social studies teachers.
17. Attend social studies teachers' conferences and consider doing a workshop.
18. Tape a day in court with a teacher and class present. This DVD will be made available to other teachers and could be presented to them at a professional development day.
19. Develop a program for judges to use when either teachers visit courts or judges visit schools as part of a professional development day.
20. Have judges visit schools and talk with students about the consequences of criminal behavior.
21. Inform guidance departments about the resources available through the Judicial Branch.
22. Send out notices to judges in March of each year asking if they would be willing to speak to high school students in conjunction with Law Day. Make arrangements for judges to speak to the schools identified.
23. Contact every high school in the state and ask the school to designate a liaison who will receive educational materials about the Judicial Branch and then distribute the materials to the appropriate teachers.
24. Distribute notices in late July/early August to the designated school liaisons about resources that the Judicial Branch can provide.
25. Establish a "regional judge liaison" to work between the court and schools in a particular area.
26. Work with CT-N to get footage of the *Cipriani* trial and discuss with CT-N the possibility of creating a DVD with excerpts from the trial interspersed with judges talking about the process and what the students are seeing.
27. Explore with CT-N the option of a media/interactive learning project for students through the Connecticut Education Network.
28. Complete the workbook for upper elementary students.
29. Contact Sunday morning talk shows and radio stations about Judicial Branch-sponsored programs (like the Foreclosure Mediation Program). Explore the feasibility of developing a DVD with judges discussing how these types of programs work.

30. Incorporate into every speaking engagement a request, if approved by both the judge and the organization, to contact the local media about the event.
31. Encourage judges to let the External Affairs Division know when they are engaged in an activity that could educate the public about the courts and its programs.
32. In an era of diminishing resources for the media, provide ways to educate them about the courts, absent the day-to-day court beat reporter, such as using the website to its full potential (i.e. statistics) and providing opportunities for judges to educate the media about the courts (i.e. having judges visit media organizations to assist them in learning about the courts).
33. Ask the Chief Administrative Judges if they would be willing to write a column for the *Connecticut Law Tribune*. Also, continue encouraging judges to take advantage of opportunities to educate the public about the courts and the judiciary through the media.
34. Continue co-sponsoring yearly events with judges and members of the media to educate each other about our respective roles with the assistance of the Judicial Media Committee (i.e. Law School for Journalists and Journalists School for Judges).
35. Continue monitoring of inquiries from the news media and stories about the Judicial Branch.
36. Continue marketing positive stories about the judiciary and the Judicial Branch to news organizations.
37. Continue contacting editorial boards when necessary to present the Branch's position on an issue.
38. Develop a plan to cultivate minority news organizations including predominantly non-English speaking media organizations.

Senior Citizens *(previously listed as Seniors and the Law)*

Summary

The External Affairs Division has organized the *Seniors and the Law* program since 2001. Originally, the program was offered twice a year in different regions of the state and it featured presentations on avoiding scams, elder abuse, wills and trusts, identity theft, and jury service. As the program has been held in most judicial districts, it is now held once per year. The External Affairs Advisory Board voted at its December 5, 2008, meeting to discontinue the *Seniors and the Law* program and replace it with other ways to reach this population.

Recommendations

1. Discontinue the *Seniors and the Law* program, as most of the issues affecting seniors are not within the purview of the Superior Court.
2. Invite senior citizens to go to their local courthouse to observe proceedings and to meet with a judge.
3. As part of the *Speakers Bureau*, ask senior centers if they would like to have a judge come and address their group.
4. Suggest to Judge Paul Knierim, Probate Court Administrator, that the Probate Court consider taking over the *Seniors and the Law* program, as the topics discussed, for the most part, more closely relate to the Probate Court.

Performance Measures

1. Keep track of the number of senior groups that the External Affairs Division invites to visit their local courthouse to observe proceedings.
2. Keep track of the number of senior groups that External Affairs informs of the *Speakers Bureau*.
3. Keep track of how many of these groups request court visits.
4. Keep track of how many of these groups request speakers.
5. Determine how many of these requests the External Affairs Advisory Board is able to accommodate.
6. Prepare a yearly report on these statistics that also recommends ways to increase the number of senior citizens who participate in these programs.

Members of Community Organizations (previously listed as *Speakers Bureau*)

Summary

The External Affairs Division has managed a *Speakers Bureau* of judges since 1999. The purpose of the *Speakers Bureau* is for judges to go out into the community and address issues of interest with particular groups. The goal is to enhance the public's understanding of the judicial system, thereby increasing the public's trust and confidence in the courts. The Advisory Board was charged with enhancing the *Speakers Bureau*, both in terms of the groups who participate and the topics that are covered.

Evaluation Process

1. The External Affairs Division completed a thorough evaluation of the *Speakers Bureau*, which included statistics on the number of speaking engagements over the past several years, the topics that have been addressed, and the judges who have participated. This evaluation was provided to the members of the Advisory Board.
2. The External Affairs Division conducted research to determine whether other state judiciaries have comparable programs and, if so, how they are managed. The National Center for State Courts was also consulted. The findings were presented to the members of the Advisory Board.
3. The Board held a focus group of judges on January 9, 2009, to: (a) obtain feedback about the program; (b) get recommendations for materials that would be helpful to the judges going out into the community; and, (c) determine if a training program for the judges would be helpful, and if so, what the program should entail.

In addition to the members of the External Affairs Advisory Board, the following judges attended the focus group:

- Judge Barbara N. Bellis
- Judge James M. Bentivegna
- Judge John F. Cronan
- Judge Richard W. Dyer
- Judge Brian T. Fischer
- Judge Michael A. Mack
- Judge Douglas C. Mintz
- Judge Barry K. Stevens
- Judge Robin L. Wilson

Findings from the Focus Group

- a. The *Speakers Bureau* was a positive experience according to the judges.
 - b. Judges do not need prepared speeches, but they do need statistics.
 - c. A lot of judges are speaking at events, but not reporting their speaking engagements to the *Speakers Bureau*.
4. To assess the quality of these events, a survey was distributed to community organizations where judges have spoken. The results indicate that community groups are very satisfied with the *Speakers Bureau* and the judges who participate.
 5. The Judicial Branch's five administrative divisions were polled to determine who would be available to speak in the community as Judicial Branch employees.

Recommendations

1. Publicize the availability of the *Speakers Bureau* to community organizations.
2. Develop a bank of resources such as statistics that are readily available for judges who are part of the *Speakers Bureau*.
3. Market the *Speakers Bureau* to the judges themselves.
4. Encourage judges to inform the *Speakers Bureau* whenever they speak to a community group and provide an e-mail form for them to do so.
5. Send an e-mail to all judges once a year asking them to provide the External Affairs Division with information about the number of groups they spoke to, the topics that were addressed, where the engagement took place, and their comments on how the event went.
6. Provide evaluation forms to the judges and to the community organizations each time that a judge addresses an organization.
7. Expand the *Speakers Bureau* to include family support magistrates and Judicial Branch employees.
8. Ensure that there are accurate Branch-wide statistics available about the number of judges and employees who speak to community organizations, and require the administrative divisions to inform the *Speakers Bureau* when employees speak to community groups.
9. Urge the Chief Justice and the Chief Court Administrator to continue their efforts to remind judges that speaking to the community is one of the most important ways to educate the public about what we do and who we are.

10. Recommend to the members of the Pre-Bench Orientation Committee that they inform new judges about the importance of the *Speakers Bureau* and in going out into the community.
11. Send a list of Judicial Branch publications to every public library advising them that the resources are available upon request.

Performance Measures

1. Keep track of the number of community organizations that were sent a letter of invitation from the Chief Justice inviting them to participate in the *Speakers Bureau*.
2. Keep track of how many of these groups make requests for speakers.
3. Determine how many of these requests the External Affairs Advisory Board is able to accommodate.
4. Compile the results of the evaluations from the judges and from the community organizations.
5. Keep track of the articles or news accounts on judges or family support magistrates who speak to community groups.
6. Prepare a yearly report on this information that also compares these statistics with the results from prior years. The report should also recommend ways to increase the number of judges and community organizations that participate in the *Speakers Bureau*.

Educating Students *(previously listed as part of Media Campaign for Public Education)*

Summary

Many of the recommendations of the *Public Service and Trust Commission* centered on the need to better educate students about the role and function of the Judicial Branch. As background, the External Affairs Division is currently working with the Consortium for Law and Citizenship Education, Inc. to develop a workbook to assist upper elementary school teachers in educating their students about the role of the court system in a democratic society.

Evaluation Process

1. The External Affairs Division contacted the National Center for State Courts and other state judiciaries to obtain suggestions about ways to educate the public about the courts. This information was provided to the External Affairs Advisory Board.
2. To obtain feedback as to the best way to educate our youth, a focus group was held on February 6, 2009. The following individuals attended:
 - a. Rebecca Amanti, Assistant Principal, Waterford High School
 - b. Margaret Delaporta, Social Studies Teacher, Grasso Tech
 - c. Beth DeLuco, Assistant Director, Consortium for Law & Citizenship Education, Inc.
 - d. Dan Gregg, Department of Education
 - e. Chris Islaub, Conard High School (West Hartford)
 - f. Alyce Loesch, Westhill High School (Stamford)
 - g. Paul Skaff, Director of Special Projects, CT-N
 - h. Deb Thibault, Literacy Coordinator, Berlin Public Schools
 - i. Maureen Well, Deputy Director, Law Librarian
 - j. Jeff Vingo, St. Joseph High School (Trumbull)

Findings from Educators' Focus Group

- a. Students want to study specific cases, not just general information about the court system. The teachers liked the idea of getting footage from a real case to show to the students.

- b. The information that the Judicial Branch has been sending to schools is not getting to the teachers.
- c. As many teachers do not have phones in their classrooms, e-mailing teachers usually is the best way to reach them.
- d. Networking and personal contacts work best.
- e. Attending social studies teachers' conferences would be a great opportunity to meet the teachers.
- f. Teachers need tools that they can use to instruct students about the court system.
- g. Bringing students to court is an amazing experience for the kids, but there is a cost to the schools (buses).
- h. CT-N currently is working on a media/interactive learning project for students through the Connecticut Education Network.
- i. DVDs with talking heads explaining the court system would not work. What will work are DVDs of actual trials or court proceedings, where a judge explains what the students just saw.

Recommendations

1. Cultivate relationships with educational organizations, particularly those involving social studies teachers.
2. Attend social studies teachers' conferences and consider doing a workshop.
3. Tape a day in court with a teacher and class present. This DVD will be made available to other teachers and could be presented to them at a professional development day.
4. Develop a program for judges to use when either teachers visit courts or judges visit schools as part of a professional development day.
5. Have judges visit schools and talk with students about the consequences of criminal behavior.
6. Inform guidance departments about the resources available through the Judicial Branch.
7. Send out notices to judges in March of each year asking if they would be willing to speak to high school students in conjunction with Law Day. Make arrangements for judges to speak to the schools identified.

8. Contact every high school in the state and ask the school to designate a liaison who will receive educational materials about the Judicial Branch and then distribute the materials to the appropriate teachers.
9. Distribute notices in late July/early August to the designated school liaisons about resources that the Judicial Branch can provide.
10. Establish a “regional judge liaison” to work between the court and schools in a particular area.
11. Work with CT-N to get footage of the *Cipriani* trial and discuss with CT-N the possibility of creating a DVD with excerpts from the trial interspersed with judges talking about the process and what the students are seeing.
12. Explore with CT-N the option of a media/interactive learning project for students through the Connecticut Education Network.
13. Complete the workbook for upper elementary students.

Performance Measures

Prepare a yearly report containing the following information:

1. The number of social studies teachers’ conferences attended by a representative of the Judicial Branch.
2. How many times judges visit schools, the topics discussed, the number of students attending and the results of the evaluations from the students (or teachers) and the judges.
3. How many guidance departments were contacted and the number of guidance departments that responded to a request for resources.
4. The number of judges who responded to the e-mail asking for judges to speak to high school students in conjunction with Law Day, the number of schools who agreed to have a judge speak, and the results of the evaluations of the students (or teachers) and the judges. This information will be compared with the numbers from previous years.
5. How many requests are received for the workbook for upper elementary school students and any comments by teachers or students about the quality of the resource.
6. The status of efforts to work with CT-N to create a DVD with excerpts from the *Cipriani* trial interspersed with judges talking about the process and what the students are seeing.
7. The status of efforts to tape a day of sentencings with an educational consultant and class present. A DVD could be developed from this day to send to schools.

Educating the General Public with Help from the Media *(previously listed as Media Campaign for Public Education)*

Summary

During the course of developing the Judicial Branch's strategic plan, members of the *Public Service and Trust Commission* considered more than a dozen ways to improve and/or execute a communications campaign designed to better educate the residents about the role and function of the judiciary.

The report of the *Public Service and Trust Commission* envisioned that the Judicial Branch would work with media professionals to assist the Branch in its effort to educate members of the public about the state judiciary.

Recommendations

1. Contact Sunday morning talk shows and radio stations about Judicial Branch-sponsored programs – like the Foreclosure Mediation Program. Explore the feasibility of developing a DVD with judges discussing how these types of programs work.
2. Incorporate into every speaking engagement a request, if approved by both the judge and the organization, to contact the local media about the event.
3. Encourage judges to let the External Affairs Division know when they are engaged in an activity that could educate the public about the courts and its programs.
4. In an era of diminishing resources for the media, provide ways to educate them about the courts, absent the day-to-day court beat reporter, such as using the website to its full potential (i.e. statistics) and providing opportunities for judges to educate the media about the courts (i.e. having judges visit media organizations to assist them in learning about the courts).
5. Ask the Chief Administrative Judges if they would be willing to write a column for the *Connecticut Law Tribune*. Also, continue encouraging judges to take advantage of opportunities to educate the public about the courts and the judiciary through the media.
6. Continue co-sponsoring yearly events with judges and members of the media to educate each other about our respective roles with the assistance of the Judicial Media Committee (i.e. Law School for Journalists and Journalists School for Judges).
7. Continue monitoring of inquiries from the news media and stories about the Judicial Branch.

8. Continue marketing positive stories about the judiciary and the Judicial Branch to news organizations.
9. Develop a plan to cultivate minority news organizations including predominantly non-English speaking media organizations.

Performance Measures

Prepare a yearly report containing the following:

1. The number of inquiries from the news media.
2. The number of times that media outlets have reported on a Judicial Branch-sponsored program.
3. The number of times that the local media has reported on a judge who spoke to a community organization as part of the *Speakers Bureau*.
4. The number of columns authored by a judge.
5. The number of camera requests received and granted.

**Recommendations of the External Affairs Advisory Board
that have already been or are in the process of
being implemented as of June 11, 2009**

Summary of Recommendations

1. Discontinue the *Seniors and the Law* program, as most of the issues affecting seniors are not within the purview of the Superior Court.

Status: Contingent upon approval from the Chief Court Administrator.

2. Invite senior citizens to go to their local courthouse to observe proceedings and to meet with a judge.

Status: Lists of senior citizen centers and senior groups are being compiled.

3. As part of the *Speakers Bureau*, ask senior centers if they would like to have a judge come and address their group.

Status: Lists of senior citizen centers are being compiled.

4. Suggest to Judge Paul Knierim, Probate Court Administrator, that the Probate Court consider taking over the *Seniors and the Law* program, as the topics discussed, for the most part, more closely relate to the Probate Court.

Status: Contingent upon the response to Recommendation #1.

5. Publicize the availability of the *Speakers Bureau* to community organizations.

Status: Ongoing

6. Develop a bank of resources such as statistics that are readily available for judges who are part of the *Speakers Bureau*.

Status: Ongoing

7. Market the *Speakers Bureau* to the judges themselves.

Status: Ongoing

8. Encourage judges to inform the *Speakers Bureau* whenever they speak to a community group and provide an e-mail form for them to do so.

Status: Ongoing

9. Send an e-mail to all judges once a year asking them to provide External Affairs with information about the number of groups they spoke to, the topics that were addressed, where the engagement took place and their comments on how the event went.

Status: The e-mail will be sent out after the Judges Institute and annually thereafter.

10. Provide evaluation forms to the judges and to the community organizations each time that a judge addresses an organization.

Status: Ongoing

11. Expand the *Speakers Bureau* to include family support magistrates and Judicial Branch employees.

Status: If this recommendation is approved by the Chief Court Administrator, an implementation meeting will be scheduled.

12. Ensure that there are accurate Branch-wide statistics available about the number of judges and employees who speak to community organizations, and require the administrative divisions to inform the *Speakers Bureau* when employees speak to community groups.

Status: Contingent upon Recommendation #11

13. Urge the Chief Justice and the Chief Court Administrator to continue their efforts to remind judges that speaking to the community is one of the most important ways to educate the public about what we do and who we are.

Status: The Chief Justice and Judge Susan Handy, co-chair of the Board, will encourage judges to participate in the Speakers Bureau at the Judges Institute in June.

14. Recommend to the members of the Pre-Bench Orientation Committee that they inform new judges about the importance of the *Speakers Bureau* and in going out into the community.

Status: Contingent upon approval of the Chief Court Administrator.

15. Send a list of Judicial Branch publications to every public library advising them that these resources are available upon request.

Status: In the process of compiling a list of public libraries.

16. Cultivate relationships with educational organizations, particularly those involving social studies teachers.

Status: Ongoing

17. Attend social studies teachers' conferences and consider doing a workshop.

Status: Contingent upon approval of the Chief Court Administrator.

18. Tape a day in court with a teacher and class present. This DVD will be made available to other teachers and could be presented to them at a professional development day.

Status: The taping has been completed and the DVD is being developed.

19. Develop a program for judges to use when either teachers visit courts or judges visit schools as part of a professional development day.

Status: Contingent upon the Chief Court Administrator's approval.

20. Have judges visit schools and talk with students about the consequences of criminal behavior.

Status: Ongoing

21. Inform guidance departments about the resources available through the Judicial Branch.

Status: Lists of guidance departments are being compiled.

22. Send out notices to judges in March of each year asking if they would be willing to speak to high school students in conjunction with Law Day. Make arrangements for judges to speak to the schools identified.

Status: Ongoing

23. Contact every high school in the state and ask the school to designate a liaison who will receive educational materials about the Judicial Branch and then distribute the materials to the appropriate teachers.

Status: Completed

24. Distribute notices in late July/early August to the designated school liaisons about resources that the Judicial Branch can provide.

Status: Pending

25. Establish a "regional judge liaison" to work between the court and schools in a particular area.

Status: Contingent upon approval of the Chief Court Administrator.

26. Work with CT-N to get footage of the *Cipriani* trial and discuss with CT-N the possibility of creating a DVD with excerpts from the trial interspersed with judges talking about the process and what the students are seeing.

Status: Contingent upon approval of the Chief Court Administrator.

27. Explore with CT-N the option of a media/interactive learning project for students through the Connecticut Education Network.

Status: Contingent upon approval of the Chief Court Administrator.

28. Complete the workbook for upper elementary students.

Status: The workbook will be available for distribution to schools in advance of the 2009-2010 school year.

29. Contact Sunday morning talk shows and radio stations about Judicial Branch-sponsored programs (like the Foreclosure Mediation Program). Explore the feasibility of developing a DVD with judges discussing how these types of programs work.

Status: Ongoing

30. Incorporate into every speaking engagement a request, if approved by both the judge and the organization, to contact the local media about the event.

Status: Ongoing

31. Encourage judges to let the External Affairs Division know when they are engaged in an activity that could educate the public about the courts and its programs.

Status: Ongoing

32. In an era of diminishing resources for the media, provide ways to educate them about the courts, absent the day-to-day court beat reporter, such as using the website to its full potential (i.e. statistics) and providing opportunities for judges to educate the media about the courts (i.e. having judges visit media organizations to assist them in learning about the courts).

Status: Ongoing

33. Ask the Chief Administrative Judges if they would be willing to write a column for the *Connecticut Law Tribune*. Also, continue encouraging judges to take advantage of opportunities to educate the public about the courts and the judiciary through the media.

Status: Contingent upon approval of the Chief Court Administrator

34. Continue co-sponsoring yearly events with judges and members of the media to educate each other about our respective roles with the assistance of the Judicial Media Committee (i.e. Law School for Journalists and Journalists School for Judges).

Status: Ongoing and in conjunction with the Judicial Media Committee

35. Continue monitoring of inquiries from the news media and stories about the Judicial Branch.

Status: Ongoing

36. Continue marketing positive stories about the judiciary and the Judicial Branch to news organizations.

Status: Ongoing

37. Continue contacting editorial boards when necessary to present the Branch's position on an issue.

Status: Ongoing

38. Develop a plan to cultivate minority news organizations including predominantly non-English speaking media organizations.

Status: In process in conjunction with the Limited English Proficiency Committee