

MACM MATTERS



MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION FOR COURT MANAGEMENT Winter 2021

Update from the MACM President By: Jennifer Miller Court Operations Manager, Fourth Judicial District

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Greetings MACM Members!

October brought our organization the 2021 MACM Conference: Renew, Rebuild, Reconnect in Duluth. I was thrilled to see and interact with over 230 members during the conference. I want to thank Kris Cunningham and the Education Committee for organizing excellent education content, Mary Dalbec and the Membership Services Committee for the amazing social networking events, and Ann Basta and the Legislative and Outreach Committee for setting up an extremely successful charitable campaign.

At the conference, I had the honor of interacting with so many of you. The positive feedback about the conference content, the speakers, and the opportunity to connect with each other was overwhelming. Our Board of Directors and our committees truly value your feedback, and we thank you for your participation in this year's conference. It was an amazing opportunity for us to renew ourselves in our work, rebuild ourselves as leaders, and reconnect with ourselves and our peers in ways that have not been available to us.



MACM Matters

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*Any MACM member may submit an article for the newsletter.
If interested, please contact Mary Dalbec for more information.*

During the Board of Director's meeting prior to the conference, a slight change to MACM's mission statement was approved:

"MACM is a membership organization committed to the enrichment of its court leaders through professional growth and development opportunities, promoting advancements and innovation in court administrations, and partnering with other professionals working to improve the justice system in Minnesota."

The revision changed "members" to "court leaders" in the first part of the statement. Annette Fritz, Past President of MACM and the Washington County Court Administrator, brought a suggestion to the Board to include the word "leaders" in a revised statement. Board members agreed that the suggestion encapsulates the intentions of our organization. MACM membership is an ever-growing number of talented and innovative court leaders. Our Board and Committees are continually focused on how our decisions serve our membership. As we move into 2022, I look forward to working with our Committees and Board of Directors on new initiatives and planning future events. We will utilize the revision of this mission statement to fuel our intentions and provide for the enrichment of our leaders.

Thank you all for your continued commitment to the profession of court management and for your service to the people of Minnesota. I hope you all have a safe and wonderful holiday season and wish you the best in 2022.

Membership Services Committee Update

By: Mary Dalbec, Committee Chair
Carver County Court Administrator

Another wonderful conference this past fall and once again our gathering was unique from any prior conference. We were happy to welcome so many to MACM's social events where; even though we had many precautionary measures in place, we were still able to network, reconnect, and rebuild in Duluth.

At the awards banquet MACM recognized six deserving MACM members. The awards are a great opportunity for our association to show appreciation to our members that go above and beyond the call of duty across the state. We'll be asking for award nominations next summer so please consider nominating any of our members for one of our great awards. MACM awarded \$3,995 in scholarships to seven members this past year. Congratulations to Lindsay Allgood, Amanda Brown, Nicole Korby, Jill Prohovsky, Teresa VanBuskirk, Aaron Williamson, and Kate Wilson on your MACM scholarship. The scholarship program is intended to promote the organization's efforts to improve judicial administration by financially supporting member education. During the most recent board meeting, the board approved a motion to renew MACM's scholarship fund of \$4,000 for the next fiscal year. Scholarship nominations are requested each May and November. More information about the scholarship program can be found at our [MACM website](#). We welcomed thirteen vendors to our vendor show, 7 of which were gold vendors. Even though many of you do not have the final decision with regards to vendors, each vendor appreciates you connecting with them and hearing about their products and services.



Mary Dalbec

Lastly, a big thank you to the [Membership Services Committee](#) members for all their hard work and support provided over the last year. We hope that 2022 will be an even better year for our 400+ members and we look forward to seeing everyone at next year's conference. Happy Holidays and a very happy New Year.

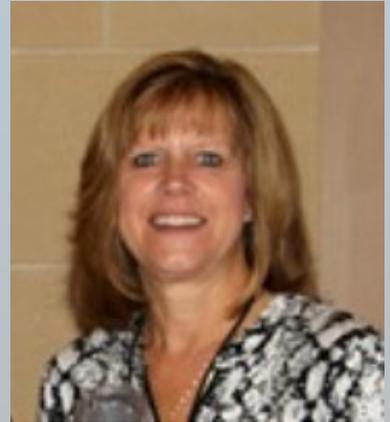
Education Committee Update

By: Kris Cunningham, Committee Chair
Chisago County Court Administrator

We held our 2022 Renew, Rebuild and Reconnect conference in person at the Duluth Entertainment Conference Center and the Holiday Inn in Duluth October 5th-7th. It was so awesome to see everyone and get to re-connect, it's been a while. We had approximately 218 attendees for the conference. I would like to thank all the Education Committee for their hard work on making this conference a success. I know it was a strange and uncertain time to plan an in-person conference. I would also like to thank everyone who took the time to complete the conference evaluation. We got some great input that we will take into consideration when planning future conferences. As always, if anyone has any speakers they would like to recommend, please feel free to reach out to myself or any of the committee members.

The conference started off with Judge John DeSanto on a Will to Murder, where he took us inside one of the most famous murder cases in Duluth history, the Condon murders where he was the lead prosecutor. Great way to kick off a conference in Duluth. We also heard about Wild Leadership from Chris Heeter. We received a lot of great feedback that her plenary was very relevant and hopefully some of you have used the "doghouse" since you got back. We also had several other great speakers and breakout sessions this year.

We are still in the process of determining the exact location of the 2022 conference but anticipate it will be the week of September 19th. The committee will be reviewing the options at the December meeting and then I will send out a save the date. Since this year we were unable to do the round table sessions we hope to be able to provide virtual round table sessions sometime in February. Information on that will be sent out later in December.



Kris Cunningham

I hope everyone has a safe and happy holiday season!

Legislative and Outreach Committee Update

By: Ann Basta, Committee Chair
Court Operations Supervisor, Fourth Judicial District

The Legislative and Outreach Committee wishes to thank everyone who donated to this year's charitable drive. Together we were able to raise the highest amount of donations any of us can remember --- \$4,880! That money will go to [The Food Group](#), a MN non-profit focused on using nutritious food to strengthen communities across the state. It will be used to assist Minnesotans facing food hunger through food shelf and meal program support throughout the state, a healthy and affordable grocery sales program, and a farmer education program for farmers historically underrepresented in farm ownership learning to operate organic farm businesses.



Ann Basta

A special thanks for all our silent auction basket contributors, bidders, and winners. Together the baskets helped raised \$875 for The Food Group and were a great success. We hope to bring them to a future conference.

On behalf of the Legislative and Outreach Committee, thank you again for your very generous donations and support!

Join NACM

By: Vicky Carlson, Scott County Court Administrator

MACM Members – Consider Joining NACM

I want to share an amazing opportunity that has been instrumental to my career success and has been a wonderful leadership experience: membership in the National Association for Court Management (NACM). NACM is the largest organization of court management professionals in the world, with Executives from various positions in the courts. NACM's mission is educating court professionals, providing community, sharing information, and advocating on important court and justice system topics on a national level. NACM has valuable opportunities to learn and share knowledge. You will have access to discounted national conferences and the opportunity to network with like-minded colleagues from across the US. NACM membership also gives you access to its publications and other resources including free webinars. You can get more involved through committee service and then know a few folks when you arrive at conferences.

If you have any questions about NACM membership, feel free to reach out to Vicky Carlson, Past President of NACM and MACM.



National Association for Court Management
Strengthening Court Professionals

2021 Conference Leadership Kick-Off—Jeff Shorba

By: Sheldon Clark, Deputy District Administrator—Tenth District

State Court Administrator Jeff Shorba began his opening remarks by noting how excited he was to be at the conference. He decided this year to again award two State Court Administrator Awards – one team award and one individual award.

The team award went to the Hennepin County High Profile Trial Team for their work on the State v. Derek Chauvin case. Mr. Shorba noted that there was no manual for conducting the highest profile trial the State of Minnesota has ever seen all while in the middle of a global pandemic. It was the first live streamed trial. Over twenty-three million viewed the live stream. Mr. Shorba noted the trial was transparent and showed how accessible the justice system is in Minnesota.

Hennepin County Court Administrator Sarah Lindahl-Pfeiffer accepted the award on behalf of the team. She noted it was a team effort.

The individual award was presented to Becky Brandt, Winona County Court Administrator. Mr. Shorba noted that Ms. Brandt was asked to serve in multiple court administrator roles in early March 2020. This was just before the first of several emergency orders related to the COVID-19 pandemic were issued. Ms. Brandt exhibited a willingness and eagerness to continue in multiple roles. She embraced the oneCourtMN philosophy by engaging and empowering staff to give input. She matched employee strengths to specific work assignments and promoted cross county workflows.

Mr. Shorba then transitioned to focusing on the year ahead. He thanked everyone for their leadership during this once in a lifetime challenge. He noted that we must remain flexible and adaptable. Protecting health and safety must be our number one priority. The pandemic has focused our attention to remote hearings. The long-term strategy for remote hearings includes a deliberate and phased approach.

He concluded his remarks by noting a recent Harvard Business Review article entitled *Is Your Organization Surviving Change – Or Thriving in It?* by John P. Kotter, Vanessa Akhtar, and Gaurav Gupta. The article noted that “increasing volatility, complexity, and rapid change is the new normal.” He encouraged everyone to be proactive and have a positive message about the incredible opportunities that lie ahead.



2021 Conference—The Glensheen Murders: Over 40 Years of Mystery and Intrigue

By: Lisa Braaten, Business Process Specialist—Second District

Senior Judge John DeSanto divides his prosecutorial career into separate time frames, B.C and A.C. (Before Caldwell and After Caldwell). Six years into prosecuting criminal cases for the St. Louis County Attorney’s Office, one of the highest profile murder cases in Minnesota’s history tumbled into his lap. In the early morning hours of June 27, 1977, Duluth heiress Elisabeth Congdon (83) and her night nurse, Velma Pietila (66) were murdered in Duluth’s Glensheen Mansion.

Judge DeSanto’s presentation at MACM outlined the trials of Marjorie Congdon, one of the adopted daughters of Elizabeth, and Marjorie’s second husband, Roger Caldwell. Roger’s trial in Crow Wing County ran for 13 weeks, while the Dakota County trial for Marge lasted 16 weeks. In addition to being one of Minnesota’s highest profile cases, the trials were also two of the longest in Minnesota criminal court history, totaling 276 sworn witnesses between the state (215) and the defense (61).

Still emotional at times during the presentation of the 44-year-old case, DeSanto described how he earned the nickname “Kitchen Sink DeSanto”, his relationships with defense attorneys Doug Thomson and Ron Meshbesh, the ups and downs of each lengthy trial, and the personality make-up of Roger and Marjorie (Congdon) Caldwell.



Senior Judge DeSanto

He co-wrote the book “*Will to Murder*” with the lead detective in the case, Gary Waller and former *Duluth News-Tribune* crime reporter, Gail Feichtinger. It is a very interesting read, including trial information not released by the media. Anyone still interested in purchasing the book can contact Judge DeSanto at jdesanto46@yahoo.com.

Glensheen: The Musical became a sold-out event at the St. Paul History Theatre and the blockbuster hit will be performed during Duluth’s Playhouse 2021-2022 season, as well as other theatre venues throughout the state.



A tour of the mansion after the conference ended – a beautiful time of year to do so!
Photo by Lisa Braaten

2021 Conference—Wild Leadership—Chris Heeter

By: Megan Bergman, Isanti County Court Administrator

“Bringing all of who you are to all of what you do.” This important message was one of the many insightful takeaways that Chris brought to the crowd. Using playful analogies of her experience leading a team of fluffy, canine sled dogs, Chris got the crowd laughing with many familiar players that make up a team. From the dog that didn’t “play well with others”, to the excited leader that needed to take some “doghouse” moments before getting hitched to the sled to lead her team, or the delightful fluff-ball that runs just fast enough to not have to pull their weight. Chris’s first-hand experiences watching her unique furry teammates and coming up with creative, collaborative ways to make each team member’s strengths or weaknesses work with the team and encourage growth was an impactful way to correlate real life leadership of our own teams in the workplace.

Chris also encouraged the group to remember that we all make mistakes. At times, we all could use a “do-over”. Maybe you reacted poorly to an employee’s question in a meeting. Later, you think about how you wish you would have responded in a more encouraging or thought-provoking way. Asking your team or team member for a do-over shows an authentic and vulnerable way to admit you made a mistake and shows your genuine attempt to correct it. Do-overs are an important trust building skill that any good leader would want to incorporate in their day-to-day approach to problems.

Chris’s incorporation of cute dog videos, and her real-life debut on National Geographic sparked many laughs and moments for us all to take a “paw-z”. A pause to consider how we can use our own team member’s strengths and unique traits to creatively lead our team in the right direction – together. Stay wild.



Chris Heeter

2021 Conference—Seasons of Life with Change and Perseverance— Richard Coffey

By: Vanessa Jeske, Goodhue Court Administrator

Richard Coffey is a native of North Carolina. After graduating from high school, he served three years in the United States Army as an Airborne Paratrooper, a member of the first to fight, last to fall 82nd Airborne.

Richard played basketball for the University of Minnesota Gophers. After completing his degree in business, Richard played professional basketball in Europe, Asia and in the NBA with the Minnesota Timberwolves. Following his basketball career, Richard worked as a leader in the corporate sales industry for over 20 years.

Richard shared with us that every person should have a personal strategic plan. He talked about change, attitude, and perseverance. Having the right attitude is key for continued success. He also talked about creating your own brand and to not be someone else's because you are the one in charge of you.

He talked about the power of self-evaluation, to sit back and review yourself, and how you can grow professionally and personally by putting your fears behind you and move through your failures. This personal development is key to both you and your company's success. He talked about not only being a great boss, but a great team member! A great team will thrive and promote team success.

Photos from the New Member/First Time Attendee Event



Annual MACM Award Recipients for 2021

Six distinguished Minnesota Judicial Branch employees were honored for their professional expertise and contributions to the teams and workplaces they serve at the recent Minnesota Association for Court Management (MACM) conference.

Cheri Woehler of Mille Lacs & Benton County District Courts – Coach/Mentor of the Year Award

Hilary Huntley of the Sixth Judicial District – Early Career Excellent Award

Cheryl Wallat of the Fourth Judicial District – Pandemic Hero Award

Sonja Kruger of the Fifth Judicial District – Champion of Change Award

Heather Kendall of the Second Judicial District – Distinguished Service Award

Karen Mareck of the State Court Administrator's Office – Lifetime Achievement Award



Cheri Woehler, Hilary Huntley, Cheryl Wallat (accepted on her behalf by her daughter, Jade), Sonja Kruger, Heather Kendall, and Karen Mareck

Cheri Woehler, Multi-County Court Administrator for Mille Lacs and Benton County District Courts in the Seventh Judicial District, was awarded the Coach/Mentor of the Year award. The award recognizes an individual who fosters trust while encouraging others to achieve their goals without thought of reciprocation. The recipient of the award shares their skills and knowledge with others and provides excellent coaching in the ongoing development and enrichment of others.

Woehler is an advocate for judges and employees, empowering her employees and taking an interest in each of their goals and aspirations. She provides a wealth of knowledge, sharing resources, training, and her personal experiences to help others grow and learn. Woehler is the representative of the Seventh and Eight Judicial Districts on the Legislative and Outreach committee for MACM. She has worked for the Judicial Branch for 31 years.

Hilary Huntley, Deputy District Administrator in the Sixth Judicial District, received the Early Career Excellence Award. The award recognizes a person who demonstrates achievement in the courts through obtaining a high level of knowledge in a short amount of time, is a quick learner, and a valuable resource to others. The recipient is dependable and consistent while working to achieve success in their local court, district, or for the Judicial Branch and demonstrates outstanding leadership by considering stakeholders when making decisions.

Huntley has had extensive involvement with countless projects over the last year and played a critical role in the Sixth Judicial District's ability to resume operations during the pandemic. She led her district through challenges and changes by leading by example, being patient, and ensuring others had the resources and training needed to be successful. Huntley is a member of the Court Operations Advisory Workgroup, Exhibit Program, Remote Hearing Improvement Workgroup, Remote Interpreter Workgroup, State Fair Workgroup, Equal Justice Committee, and Change Agent Network. She has worked for the Judicial Branch since 2013.

Cheryl Wallat, Fourth Judicial District Facilities Manager, was awarded the Pandemic Hero Award. The award recognizes a person who has excelled and shown vigilant dedication to the court during the pandemic. The recipient has demonstrated exceptional service by leading through operational transitions and being supportive and patient with the teams they lead, while recognizing the importance of the health and safety of everyone.

Wallat led the Fourth Judicial District through COVID-19 safety protocols and preparedness plans. She worked extensively on courtroom set-up, signage, social distancing markings, preparing public court areas, and many personal protective equipment distributions. She was proactive, diligent, and creative in finding sources to fulfill disinfectants, dividers, and cleaning supplies for the district's 90 courtrooms and six buildings. Wallat's hard work allowed judicial officers, staff, customers, and partners to safely navigate court spaces during the pandemic and helped ensure access to justice in a manner that prioritized health and safety.

Sonja Kruger, Deputy District Administrator in the Fifth Judicial District, was honored as the Champion of Change. The recipient of this award fosters collaboration to promote innovation by embracing opportunities to utilize technology and other resources to increase efficiencies and productivity in the workplace.

Kruger continually pushes her colleagues in the Fifth Judicial District and across the Judicial Branch to look at different ways of doing business to ensure access to justice and the effective administration of justice. Her enthusiasm and positive attitude led to several reengineering efforts across all areas of court operations, which include the creation of specialized teams, several district-wide teams, new ways to manage case processing across the district, and permanent remote work opportunities. Kruger has worked for the Judicial Branch for 28 years.

Karen Mareck, Deputy Director of the Court Services Division in the State Court Administrator's Office, received the 2021 Lifetime Achievement Award. The award honors a recipient's many contributions to the court management profession and their years of service to the Judicial Branch.

Mareck was recognized for her dedication to the Judicial Branch and the citizens of Minnesota. Her deep knowledge, understanding, and commitment to the Judicial Branch's mission of ensuring fair and equal access to justice has benefitted all who work with her and those who utilize the services and support she has helped create. Mareck has led efforts to create workable and innovative solutions that have transitioned court operations in a meaningful and impactful way. She has led and co-led several integral efforts and projects, including the eCourtMN initiative, formalization of the Self-Represented Litigant Program, Court Administration Processes (CAPS) and the CAPs unit, and the Pandemic Response Team. Mareck has worked for the Judicial Branch for 34 years.

**2021 Conference—Crash Reconstruction and Investigation—Sergeant Aaron Churness, Minnesota State Patrol
By: Jodie Pfeffer, Court Operations Supervisor—Washington County**

Sergeant Churness presented attendees with an explanation of how he reconstructs a crash using real cases from years past. He told the story of receiving a call at 1am from dispatch indicating there was a crash with three fatalities which caused the road to close. Sgt. Churness contacted the trooper on scene to get their perspective of what happened and started to mentally prepare for the investigation while en route. When he arrived on the scene, he saw two vehicles with extensive damage and clothes in the roadway.

Evidence that is considered when reconstructing a scene is the crush profile, area of impact, tire marks or scratches, fluid trails, debris fields, and the use of equipment called a Total Station and Scale drawing. He explained how he uses some of the evidence to understand how the crash started, working backwards in time from the final resting place of the vehicles to the direction of travel and speed before impact. This case was particularly difficult as there were no tire marks pre-impact, no witnesses to the crash, both drivers were killed, and all passengers were seriously injured or were minors. There was also no crash analysis data from the vehicles.

It was very interesting to hear about the entire process of the investigation. It was also fascinating to learn how many courses must be taken to become a crash reconstruction expert.

**2021 Conference—Neutrality and DEI: What's the Deal?—Alex Abraha and Brittney Dennis
By: Gena Jones, Deputy District Administrator—Second District**

Alex Abraha is the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Specialist in the Court Services Division of SCAO. Brittney Dennis is the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Specialist for the Second and Tenth Judicial Districts. The 4th District DEI team was not present but was recognized for their contributions to the presentation – Nik Nadeau, Jerald Green, and Jordan Zickermann. To acknowledge that the DECC is located on lands of the indigenous people, they started their presentation with a land acknowledgement statement and a formal recognition of the unique and enduring relationship that exists between American Indians and their territories.

Alex and Brittney provided an overview of neutrality, diversity, equity, and inclusiveness. They described the concept of a safe space for employees and those visiting our courts. They also characterized the courts as providing individuals and groups with access to the resources and opportunities to equitably thrive in the community. The group was challenged in breakout sessions to consider various DEI and neutrality issues present in the courts. One think/pair/share breakout had participants pondering what messages they heard about the judicial system when growing up, who those messages came from, and how their perspectives have changed over time.

The branch has expressed the desire to hire a diverse workforce. There are things we can do to bring educated diverse people to the organization, so we have qualified candidates to select from. Our DEI specialists are committed to guiding the Branch through those conversations to support these efforts.

2021 Conference—Good Mental Health in the Workplace—Kay King, National Alliance on Mental Health By: Annette Fritz, Washington County Court Administrator

This breakout session presented on five things you can do to create a workplace that values good mental health:

- Promote good mental health
- Know common symptoms of mental illness
- Change our attitudes towards people with mental illness
- Learn about accommodation
- Create places that foster respect and acceptance

Promoting good mental health includes: Control what you can, limit access to the news, move every day, eat nutritious meals, connect with others, think the best of people, and give people space and grace.

The most untreated type of mental illness is anxiety, it is 3 times more common than depression.

Address stress by considering both physical and mental health. Encourage people to take time off such as vacation and breaks. Consider taking time off for a mental health day to relieve stress. Remember, the State Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to you for help.

What to do for self-care; here are some common approaches and recommendations:

- Get plenty of sleep
- Enjoy sunshine
- Cook, write or draw
- Talk to others
- Walk or bike
- Read, tidy, garden

Did you know there is a course *First Aid for Mental Health*? Kay King with NAMI teaches this 8-hour course for up to 30 people in person or online; 6-hours. There is a fee to attend.

Symptoms of mental health in the workplace if untreated or undertreated may lead to symptoms that interfere with work. It is not our place to “play doctor or therapist”. There are various resources available including:

In MN Crisis **274747 mobile phone 24/7

Text “MN” to 741741 – national crisis text line 24/7

National Suicide Hotline 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

If calling 911 ask for a CIT trained officer

Look up your local county crisis number

Please visit the NAMI website for more information and several online training opportunities

www.namimn.org or email them at namihelps@namimn.org

2021 Conference—Wildly Inclusive—Chris Heeter By: Megan Bergman, Isanti County Court Administrator

What “coat” do you hang up at the door when you walk into the office? At home or with friends are you funny? Sarcastic? Crafty? Loud? Mom? Dad? When you come into work do you “hang” that coat up and put on your “serious” coat or your “professional coat? Why do we do that? Why do we have to do that?

In this session, Chris Heeter brought her Wild theme to empower us by being wildly inclusive at work and at home. “Bringing all of who you are to all of what you do”, into a 2nd breakout session, Chris reminded us that our differences are important. We all carry differences. Different backgrounds, different upbringings, different beliefs, different races, different sexual orientation, and many other ways in which we are all different. Bringing all of who you are helps us to approach people with curiosity and humility. Being authentic is greater than being perfect.

Remember, authenticity outlasts and outshines perfection. Show up, authentically who you are and be there for one another. Speak the positive. Instead of, “Don’t forget this”, maybe say, “Remember this”. Chris gave white-water rafting scenarios to think about what we say to our team to help lead them in the right direction when we’ve flipped the canoe backwards or are heading straight for some big rocks. How we say things is important. How we show up is important. At some point in your life, someone, somewhere, believed in you and this is the gift that we pass on as leaders. At some point in your career, someone believed in: YOU! If we are given that gift; we pass it on. Being a leader takes, “Bringing all of who you are to all of what you do.” Stay wild.

2021 Conference—All About Rule 20's—Dr. Cranbrook **By: Sheldon Clark, Deputy District Administrator—Tenth District**

Dr. Kathryn Cranbrook is the Chief Forensic Examiner of the Regional Psych Services program.

Dr. Cranbrook explained the difference between competency (20.01) and criminal responsibility (20.02). She also spoke about the civil commitment standard. She explained competency evaluations have been going up in recent years. A competency evaluation considers whether a defendant understands the proceedings, can participate in their defense, and can rationally consult with their attorney. Criminal responsibility is also sometimes referred to as the M'Naghten standard. The evaluation asks; did they know what they were doing and that is wrong to do. It is an affirmative defense that is seen in less than one percent of criminal cases. If an individual is found to be incompetent under a Rule 20.01 evaluation, there will not be a Rule 20.02 evaluation.

The base rate of incompetency nationally is 27.5%. However, in recent years it has increased dramatically, perhaps as high as 40 to 50%. Dr. Cranbrook also spoke of "the gap" which is somewhat unique to Minnesota. "The gap" refers to situations where someone is found not competent to proceed under the Rule 20.01 standard but do not meet the civil commitment standard of Rule 20.03. These individuals do not typically meet the civil commitment requirements because often they are committing criminal offenses that do not pose a risk of harm.

2021 Conference—Protecting Against Fraud in a Pandemic World— **Presented by Wells Fargo** **By: Linda Herman, Finance Manager—SCAO**

This session provided an in-depth look into the impact of internal and external fraud in today's digital world with a focus on the tools that business leaders can implement to address it. Common types of financial fraud were discussed along with real-life examples of fraud that has occurred on Judicial Branch bank accounts. Services currently available to address these risks were provided as well as additional internal controls and mitigations. Internal fraud examples initiated by Judicial Branch employees were shared as well with references to the training, policies and risk assessments currently in place to mitigate the risks.

2021 Conference—To Work Remotely or Not Work Remotely, That is **the Question** **By: Annette Fritz, Washington County Court Administrator**

To work remote or work at the courthouse, that is the question. The answer, how about both... for some court employees. Over the years some districts and counties have conducted pilots with some employees working from locations other than the courthouse or work schedules other than the traditional business workday. Those experiences are now expanded to a new level.

During the height of COVID19 we experienced extraordinary evolution and opportunity for judges and staff to work at locations other than the courthouse. Tools and equipment that may be needed to work remote is now available. From this experience the remote work policy was reviewed and amended.

Amended MJB policy 322(a) Remote Work Policy was discussed in this breakout session including:

- How and Why of the MJB Remote Work Policy
- What are Business Needs
- How to Promote Hybrid Work Environment

The amended policy promotes remote and hybrid work opportunities based on business needs. Some positions may need to be primarily at the court building or may need to be primarily remote. However, many positions may be appropriate for a hybrid work schedule which includes both at the court building and remote. Court leaders are encouraged to review the policy, discuss the hybrid work option with staff, consider business needs, and determine how the policy may help staff and business needs. It is hopeful that the hybrid work options enhance the work experience to increase MJB as an employer of choice and help retain our dedicated court staff.

Where are we today: for some it may be exciting and energizing, for others it may be concerning or challenging. No matter what stage we may be at, staff engagement and leadership support are critical.

For more information, including definitions for remote locations and tools for managing remote work, please review the Remote Work Policy 322(a) available from CourtNet. If questions, please contact your Human Resources representatives or Katie Schurrer at State Court Administration.

2021 Conference—Maria’s Voice

By: Gena Jones, Deputy District Administrator—Second District

“Awareness + Small Acts = an opportunity to make an impact in a family’s experience through criminal and civil proceedings”. This is how Bill Pew and Lissa Weimelt started the conversation as they shared with us the story of their daughter’s murder and their subsequent interactions with the court system.

Bill and Lissa walked through their exchanges with the county attorney, and the criminal and civil courts. They expressed that everyone ending up in court has a story. They challenged us to put a human aspect into our dealings with people in crisis and to think about what we could perhaps do differently with respect to those interactions.

For instance, their daughter was not case number XX-CR-20-1234; she was a person, and she had a name. They noted the defendant was called by his name in court, but when referencing their daughter, she was referred to as “the decedent”. She was a person; she has a name, was the message they wished to express to us.

The family walked us through their mindset during this difficult time and that they were feeling traumatized, sad, emotionally fractured, and confused. They found their world had been altered and were now surrounded by unfamiliar jargon. They challenged the group to consider what we could say or do to communicate our intent to build trust with those coming to our court? As court employees, it is our job to remain neutral, but are there opportunities for growth?

Lastly, Bill and Lissa asked us to join them by taking the Maria’s Voice pledge to learn more about the signs of domestic abuse. Click here to learn more about the Power of the Pledge Network - [Maria's Voice — Maria's Voice Pledge Network - Individuals \(mariasvoice.org\)](https://mariasvoice.org).

2021 Conference—Reducing Mass Incarceration—Warrant Resolution Program

By: Sue Portugue, Court Operations Manager—Anoka County

Did you ever wonder what to do with the outstanding warrants at your courthouse? If so, this presentation from Dan Lew, the Chief Public Defender for Northeast Minnesota (Duluth) was the break-out to attend. Mr. Lew held two break-out sessions on Wednesday afternoon regarding outstanding warrants and a possible solution for this issue.

The beginning of the Warrant Resolution Program arose a few years ago to come up with a solution(s) for outstanding warrants. The goal was to simplify the process of resolving outstanding warrants with the goal of helping people avoid being arrested or detained for having an outstanding warrant. To battle this issue, the Sixth Judicial District's Criminal Justice Partners (Public Defenders Office, prosecutors, corrections, Sheriff Office and the Courts) got together to strategize on what to do with all the outstanding warrants. Knowing that if all the people were picked up on the all the outstanding warrants, the jail would not be able to accommodate it. This event would also be a time to arrange to pay outstanding fines or have a hearing before a judge. The Driver Diversion Program also would participate. This collaboration produced the Warrant Resolution Days in the Sixth Judicial District.

Warrant Resolution Days in the Sixth District have been held on a weekday during normal business hours. Knowing there was fear that the participants may get arrested, location was important. To build trust in the community, the location for the Warrant Resolution Day was at a community location (not the courthouse). The first few years of there was not much attendance. Slowly the word has gotten out regarding this event and it is publicized on the internet, newspapers, posters around the community and with pocket cards that various justice partners and social services agencies hand out. During COVID, they held even held it over Zoom!

In closing, Mr. Lew thanked the many "unsung heroes" that assisted to make this possible and in closing stated "Defend those who cannot help themselves, speak up for the poor and needy and see that they get Justice. There remains much work to do. (Dan) Is honored to continue this life's work."

2021 Conference—Employee Wellness and Resiliency— Commander Time Harris, Washington County Sheriff's Office By: Jodie Pfeffer, Court Operations Supervisor—Washington County

Commander Harris presented a message to MACM attendees about love and hope. He started his presentation with the question, "Why is it that you are here?". He shared many personal stories about his career in Law Enforcement, the impact of what he encountered every day in his home life and how he strives to have positive outlets for the stress and trauma he has experienced.

Early on in his presentation, he had all attendees write down 10 things about themselves – 5 of them positive and 5 of them negative. When everyone was done, he asked how many of us wrote down the negative items first – most in the room raised their hand. He later asked everyone to take out their phone, pull up their text messages and send a quick message to a loved one. He shared that when he has done this exercise in the past, he has received messages back from his children asking if everything was ok.

The point of those exercises was to help attendees focus on the positive and let their guard down more often. Connect with friends and loved ones, share how you are feeling, find things that make you happy and don't let them become "used to" – "I used to go running" or "I used to make time for friends". Write down your "why" – Why are you in the job you have? What about it brings you joy? – and keep it close by. That is what is going to help you get through the hard stuff. We want employees and ourselves to thrive, not just survive, so it's important to make sure we take care of ourselves. Check in with a friend, take a 5-minute break and walk around the building or put your favorite song on and dance around.

2021 Conference—Navigating Minnesota’s First Livestreamed Trial and Supporting Employees Along the Way

By: Becky Brandt—Winona Court Administrator

Plenary presentation by Sara Lindahl-Pfieffer, Sara Gonsalves, Stacy Carlson, and Shannon Townsend on the preparation of the most high-profile jury trial in the State of Minnesota. The presenters spoke about the collaboration with stakeholders, law enforcement, state, and county officials to examine every single detail and logistic of security, continuation of judicial business, access to justice, communication, and safety of everyone. It wasn't just the preparation of the most high-profile jury trial, but the civil unrest throughout the metropolitan area with protests, violent riots, the ongoing pandemic, and the anxiety and stress experienced by employees.

These leaders realized that staff needed support and processes now and going forward. Many protocols and procedures were created to give employees outlets for their security and mental health support. These leaders attended many meetings to examine all logistics to secure the building, move work and employees offsite, and secure the comings and goings of those that needed to work onsite. On several occasions, important decisions were made to close courthouse and offsite locations so staff, judges, and public could make it home safely. The presentation was intriguing, and it was apparent that the Hennepin County leaders, staff, judges, and justice partners went above and beyond during unique circumstances.



2021 Conference—Thank You Gold Vendors

A special thank you to our Gold Vendors who participated and supported MACM this year during our 2021 Conference Vendor Show on Tuesday, October 5th.

Our 2021 Gold Vendors were:

Advanced Systems Integration (ASI)
BKV Group
Innovox Audio
iSpace Environments
Klein McCarthy Architects
Mid-America Business Systems
Wold Architects and Engineers

You can find more information about the Gold Vendors by reviewing the [2021 Vendor Show Brochure](#) on our MACM website.

