



The Docket

Association of Clerks of the District Courts of Virginia

May 2021

Clerks Association Leadership

Officers

President	Rick Kahl
President-Elect	Laura Griffin
Past President	Terri Rea
Vice President	Kimberly McKittrick
Secretary/Treas.	Amy Burnham

Regional Representatives

Region 1	Courtney Payne
Region 2	Kelly Douglas Wiggins
Region 3	Shannon Meadowcroft
Region 4	Laura Hatch
Region 5	Linda Moore
Region 6	Shanna Henry
Region 7	Stephanie Crisman
Region 8	Ginger Webb
Region 9	Nikki King
Region 10	Kathy Vance

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Annual Address by Karl Hade

Since the Association could not hold an annual conference again in 2021, Mr. Hade agreed to make his annual address in our publication this year:

Dear District Court Clerks,

I am sorry we are once again unable to meet in person. The past 15 months have been extremely challenging as we have all worked hard to keep our courts open during a major pandemic. Our ability to remain open was made possible by your dedication, ingenuity and commitment to providing essential services to the citizens of Virginia. I know these have been difficult and stressful times and I am grateful and proud of your efforts. Hopefully, the worse of the pandemic is behind us and we will soon be able to return to regular operation.

Fortunately, this past year was not all bad news. So, let me provide you with some of our recent highlights. First, in the area of compensation, effective June 10, 2021, eligible employees will receive a 5% increase that will be reflected in your July 1, 2021 paycheck. We recently implemented an education rewards program providing bonus payments to those who complete the ICM Certified Court Executive Program and a salary increase for the completion of the National Center for State Courts Fellows Program.

As you know, we have been working with the Governor and leadership in the General Assembly for several years to seek funding to address our staffing shortages in the district courts. Going into the 2020 General Assembly Session, our courts were understaffed by 276 positions. Many of our courts were operating below 80% of their appropriate staffing level. In 2020, we were pleased to find strong support from

the Senate Finance & Appropriation Committee and House Appropriations Committee for our staffing request. The budget they passed included \$7,596,300 for approximately 120 new deputy clerk positions. Unfortunately, our success was short-lived when these funds were soon frozen in 2020 due to the pandemic. Thankfully, the budget passed by the 2021 General Assembly Session restored full funding for Fiscal Year 2021/2022.

My staff and I worked with the leadership of your Clerks Association to propose how to allocate these positions and we have been busy contacting the courts that will receive partial or full-time positions. These allocations will result in all courts being staffed at 80% or above. These positions will reduce our staffing needs to the lowest level since the staffing model was developed. We also hope to allocate more wage budget monies to those understaffed courts that did not receive additional positions in this process.

Although we took a significant step forward in securing proper staffing for our district courts there is still work to be done. Therefore, we plan to seek additional positions in the 2022 General Assembly Session in our continued effort to adequately staff our judiciary.

In closing, let me again express my deep appreciation for your service to the judges and citizens of the Commonwealth.

Despite staffing shortages, virtual schooling and a worldwide pandemic, you and your staff have continued to provide outstanding service under difficult and stressful circumstances. Take care and thank you for your support.

Karl R. Hade, Executive Secretary

Arlington GDC: Clerk **Brian Henshaw** would like to welcome **Heidi Kultanen Carr** and **Laura Binczewski** as their newest deputy clerks. Welcome to the Arlington GDC team, ladies!

Bedford JDR: Clerk **Stacey Arrington** welcomes **Madison Meador**, who started March 29, 2021. They are very excited to have her join their team! Stacey would like to wish “happy anniversaries” to **Christy Aud** and **Tiffany Chaffin** for seven years; **Lesley Knick** and **Victoria Pruett** for nine years; **Debby Martin** for 11 years; **Deanna Revay** for 13 years; and, **Donna Rorer** for 37 years of service! We so appreciate each of you and all you do for the Court! Stacey is so grateful for such an experienced and loyal staff! Thank you!

Buena Vista CMB: Clerk **Ginger Webb** reports that the Buena Vista CMB Court employees enjoyed lunch at the double decker pavilion located at Glen Maury Park. There was a nice breeze as they overlooked the city and enjoyed good food and conversation. A big thank you goes to the Association for the gift of appreciate that was used for this relaxing lunch.

Chesterfield GDC: Clerk **Linda Moore** would like to congratulate the following team members for service milestones: **Wanda Barron** and **Judy O’Shields**, 30 years; **Ashley Lewis**, 25 years; **Connie Sloan**, 20 years; **Lisa Trent**, 15 years; and, **Paula Freeman** and **Candi Mahaney**, 5 years. Congratulations, ladies! Linda would also like to welcome their newest full-time team members: **Yvonne Widman**, **Victoria Stonnell**, **Kellen Rose**, and **Chuck Taylor**. Additionally, a hearty welcome to their newest wage employees: **Viveca Johnson** and **Marie Ledbetter**. Finally, Linda would like to express her appreciation to the entire staff for all their hard work and resilience throughout the past year.

Chesterfield JDR: Clerk **Laura Griffin** would like to congratulate **Catie Dickinson** who is expecting later this year! Congratulations, Catie! Also, welcome to **Adam Balmer**, their newest deputy clerk.

King William/King & Queen GDC: Clerk **Jill Hall** would like to congratulate **Emily Seal** on six years in March, and **Brooke Reed** on her first anniversary in May. Congratulations, ladies!

Loudoun GDC: Clerk **Tammy Dinterman** announces a new supervisor for the criminal/traffic division: **Carla Clark**. Welcome, Carla! **Nicole Isom** was promoted to Team Leader and is expecting a baby boy in July! Congratulations, Nicole! Finally, **Camden Roberts** and **Johnathan Gilbert** started March 25, 2021, and Tammy would like to welcome them to their team!

Patrick GDC: Deputy Clerk **Cathy S. Hubbard** would like to recognize Clerk **Amanda Nester**’s Certificate of Excellence awarded through the Clerks Recognition Program. The

award was presented by Judge Joan Zigler. Mrs. Nester has been with the Patrick General District Court for ten years as of October 6, 2020. Mrs. Nester became Clerk in June 2018. Please see page 5 for a picture of Mrs. Nester.

Prince George CMB: Clerk **Denise Covington** would like to welcome **Kimberlyn Adams** to their team. Welcome, Kimberlyn! Kimberlyn will be handling their civil docket.

Prince William JDR: Clerk **Monica Burnett** sends congratulations to **Keshara Luster** on her promotion to Supervising Deputy Clerk; **Theresa Robinson** on her promotion to Pre Court Team Lead; and, **Jennifer Hall** on her promotion to Post Court Team Lead. Monica would also like to give a special thank you to the bench for their constant direction and patience through this pandemic. She believes her shoes have worn out the carpet in the doorway of each judge (Judge Baird, Judge Roltsch-Anoll, Chief Judge Bailey, Judge Lucas, & Judge Flores Laboy.

Richmond JDR: Clerk **Felicia Edmonds-Rustin** and the entire Court would like to wish **Diane Ickes** a very happy retirement after 51 years of service! Diane will retire June 1, 2021. Best wishes Diane, and thank you so much for your loyalty and dedication to Richmond JDR District Court for so many years! You will be missed!



(Pictured above: Judge Lambert, Judge Goss, Judge Tunner, Karl Hade, Chief Justice Lemons, Diane Ickes, Judge Campbell, Kimberlee Mattia, and Judge Langer.)

Spotsylvania JDR: Clerk **Susan Klingensmith** would like to welcome three new employees: **Angel Taylor**, **Kaitlyn Raines**, and **Kaitlynn Rodgers**. Welcome to the team! Also, congratulations to **Theresa Perry** on her recent marriage!

Wise GDC: Clerk **Sherry Bishop** would like to welcome **Carrie Lund** and **Nicole Miniard** to the Wise General District Court. Sherry would also like to bid farewell and best of luck in the future to **Christa Roach** and **Ronnie Large** as they have departed the Court.

York/Poquoson JDR: Clerk **Margienette Whitfield** celebrates 15 years as Clerk of Court for York/Poquoson Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court on May 1, 2021. Congratulations, Margienette! Ms. Whitfield would also like to thank all of the deputy clerks of the York/Poquoson JDR Court for all of their hard work and dedication during the past year and forthcoming. Thank you, all!

Clerks Association News:

The Clerks Association would like to welcome the following Clerks to the Executive Council: **Vickie King**, Highland CMB, Resolutions Chair; **Shannon Meadowcroft**, Henrico JDR, Region 3 Representative; **Linda Moore**, Chesterfield GDC, Region 5 Representative; and, **Heather Stevens**, Nelson JDR, Historian. The Association would also like to thank **Mariah Belcher**, **Melissa Gil**, **Dean Sprague**, and **Stephanie Swift** for their service to the Association.

The next Clerks Association meeting will be held virtually on June 25, 2021. Anyone is welcome to attend, and new officers for terms beginning July 1, 2021 will be voted on. [Meeting Link](#).

New officers for July, 1, 2021—June 30, 2023 are as follows:

President: Laura Griffin, Clerk, Chesterfield JDR
President-Elect: Kimberly McKittrick, Clerk, Montgomery GDC
Past President: Rick Kahl, Clerk, Roanoke City GDC
Vice President: Laura Hatch, Clerk, Fredericksburg GDC
Secretary/Treasurer: Amy Burnham, Clerk, Virginia Beach JDR

PROPOSED BY-LAWS AMENDMENT:

Pursuant to our By-Laws, which can be found on our [website](#), we are proposing an amendment to Article III (Meetings). Concerning amendments, our By-laws state:

ARTICLE VI – AMENDMENTS

Section 1. This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and any annual meeting.

Section 2. Any proposed amendment shall be presented to the Association membership in writing at least 30 days prior to the annual meeting at which the proposed amendment will be considered. This will allow the membership time to consider the amendment and comment thereon at the annual meeting wherein the amendment is brought to the floor for a vote.

Section 3. Any proposed amendment shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary-Treasurer and read by the Secretary-Treasurer at the opening business session of the meeting at which such proposed amendment is to be considered.

An Amendment to Article III has been proposed by the Executive Council in order to address the pandemic and our inability to meet in-person. Article III currently states:

ARTICLE III – MEETINGS

Section 1. Unless otherwise ordered by the Association or by the Executive Council, the annual meeting shall be held in the spring.

Section 2. This meeting shall be for the purpose of electing officers, receiving the reports of Officers and Committees and for any other business that may arise.

Section 3. The meetings shall be held at a time and place to be fixed by the Executive Council.

Section 4. Executive Council meetings may be held at the call of the President or by a majority vote of the Executive Council. All members of the Executive Council and any chairperson of a standing committee who are present at an Executive Council meeting shall be allowed to vote. No person shall be allowed more than one vote. Any member of the Association may attend the meetings of the Executive Council and may be heard on any matter before the council.

The proposed revisions are as follows (*in blue italics*):

ARTICLE III – MEETINGS

Section 1. Unless otherwise ordered by the Association or by the Executive Council, the annual meeting shall be held in the spring. *During times of declared Judicial Emergency, pandemic, or other act of God, when an annual meeting cannot be held and elections cannot take place, a meeting may be held by virtual means in order to hold elections as required by these by-laws. The virtual meeting will be open to the membership at-large, but only a quorum of the Executive Council will be required for the purpose of electing officers.*

Section 2. This meeting shall be for the purpose of electing officers, receiving the reports of Officers and Committees and for any other business that may arise.

Section 3. The meetings shall be held at a time and place to be fixed by the Executive Council. *During times of declared Judicial Emergency, pandemic, or other act of God, when an annual or Executive Council meeting cannot be held at a fixed place, a meeting may be held by virtual means, accordingly.*

Section 4. Executive Council meetings may be held at the call of the President or by a majority vote of the Executive Council. All members of the Executive Council and any chairperson of a standing committee who are present at an Executive Council meeting shall be allowed to vote. No person shall be allowed more than one vote. Any member of the Association may attend the meetings of the Executive Council and may be heard on any matter before the council.

The Clerks Association established a peer-nominated program in 2016 to recognize district court employees for their outstanding achievement, excellent work ethic, and distinguished service. The Clerks Association Recognition Program recognizes employees who have displayed and sustained exceptional dedication and work performance and who have gone above and beyond the call of duty throughout the year. In 2021, a year unlike any other, we had a record number of nominees, which is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the district court workforce. We are so proud of all of you, and wish to recognize this year's nominees and winners of our "clerk of the year" awards. Thank you for your unparalleled achievements in what has been the most challenging year of our lives, collectively. We appreciate your service to Virginia's district courts and her citizens.

2021 AWARD RECIPIENTS

DEPUTY CLERKS OF THE YEAR:

Faith Painter, Page Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court

(pictured at left)



Abby Harris, Floyd Combined District Court

(pictured at right)



SUPERVISING DEPUTY CLERK OF THE YEAR:

Darcee King, Arlington Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court

(pictured at right)



CLERK OF THE YEAR:

Kelly Douglas Wiggins, New Kent Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court

(pictured at left)



EXCEPTIONAL LEADERSHIP AWARDS:

Pamela Jarvis, Botetourt Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court

(pictured at right)



Monica Burnett, Prince William Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court

(pictured at left)



NOMINEES:**DEPUTY CLERKS:**

Suzanne Fariss, Giles General District Court

Sharice Allen, Hampton General District Court

Jennifer Hillock, Fairfax County General District Court

Danielle Trotman, Newport News General District Court

Jaime Bryant, Ashley Pitt, and Lorette Peebles, Greensville Combined District Court

Julie Taylor, Franklin County General District Court

Nina DiSantis, Loudon Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court

Whitney Day, Henrico Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court

Carolyn Ward, Lynchburg Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court

Annette Amendolia, Teresa Rivera, Amanda Waselewski, Marjorie Gomez-Reyes, and Vanessa Martinez, Alexandria Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court

Teresa Felts, Richmond City Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court

SUPERVISING DEPUTY CLERKS:

Jeanne Lineberry and Jenifer Posey, Hampton General District Court

Pamela Pringle and Angel Williams, Virginia Beach General District Court

Cheryl Austin and Jillian Brown, Portsmouth General District Court

Jay Converse, Fairfax County General District Court

Kathryn Turner, Alexandria Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court

CLERKS:

Sirena Kestner, New Kent General District Court

Amanda Nester, Patrick General District Court (pictured at right)

Cheryl DeVaughn, Hanover General District Court

Christy Hostetter, Augusta General District Court

Bonnie Coffey, Chesapeake Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court

Sherri Allen, Clarke Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court



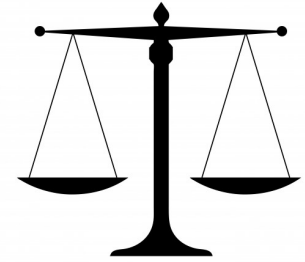
CLERKS:

Shanna Henry, Warren Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court

Janell Wilson, Greensville Combined District Court

Dominika Bui, Alexandria Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court

Laura Griffin, Chesterfield Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court

**Association recognizes all district court employees**

Association of Clerks
OF THE DISTRICT COURTS OF VIRGINIA



March 25, 2021

To our fellow District Court employees,

When the call went out for nominations for the Association's Recognition Program, we received a record number of nominations. We received submissions from deputy clerks, supervising deputy clerks, Clerks of Courts and judges. They all said the same thing...district court clerks went above and beyond in 2020! We do not need to outline and detail everything we did to survive the never-ending curveballs that were thrown our way because we continue to live and breathe it.

This has been an extraordinary year with countless examples of extraordinary work from all the District Courts. In 2020, we were labeled essential workers and expected to keep the courts open. We not only kept the courts open, but we went above and beyond to make sure everyone felt as safe as possible while amending policies and procedures on sometimes a weekly or daily basis.

The Executive Council wanted to share our appreciation and recognize each of you for your hard work and dedication this year. It is not much, but please accept this check (\$15 per clerk) and share our appreciation with your Clerk's Office. You can buy lunch for the office, have a dessert party, purchase a gift card for each employee, or anything else you can think of to show appreciation to each employee.

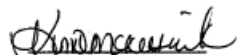
Hopefully, at this time next year we will be preparing to see you at our Annual Spring Conference!

With appreciation and gratitude for a job well done,

The Association of Clerks of the District Courts of Virginia


Rick Kahl, President


Laura Griffin, President-Elect


Kimberly McKittrick, Vice President


Amy Burnham, Secretary-Treasurer


Terri Rea, Past President

The Clerks Association unanimously voted to send each district court \$15 per employee to recognize the hard work and dedication shown to the district court system in 2020. We received wonderful feedback from many courts who were very grateful for the recognition. Here are a few excerpts:

"I wanted to share what our court did with the appreciation check. My Supervising Deputy Clerk & I planned an employee appreciation lunch on us. We then individually put the \$15.00 in a thank you card obo the Clerks Association to all employees thanking them for all they have done during one of the most difficult times in 2020. We also posted the letter from the Clerks Association for all to see."

"Just to let you know we are going to combine our money with J&D and are planning a big BBQ cook out for the first Friday in June with our Bailiff's doing the grilling. We will send Photos after if you want. It ought to be a blast. The Judges are even excited."

Association recognizes all district court employees, cont.

“Thank you and all the representatives and officers in the Association of Clerks for the appreciation. In a year of uncertainties and unknowns, we are appreciative that our hard work was seen.”

“We received our check. Everyone is very excited. We were all really down with all the localities and state agencies receiving a bonus, and court employees not receiving any recognition. This makes us feel good. We certainly thank you for it. We are planning on having a nice lunch together.”

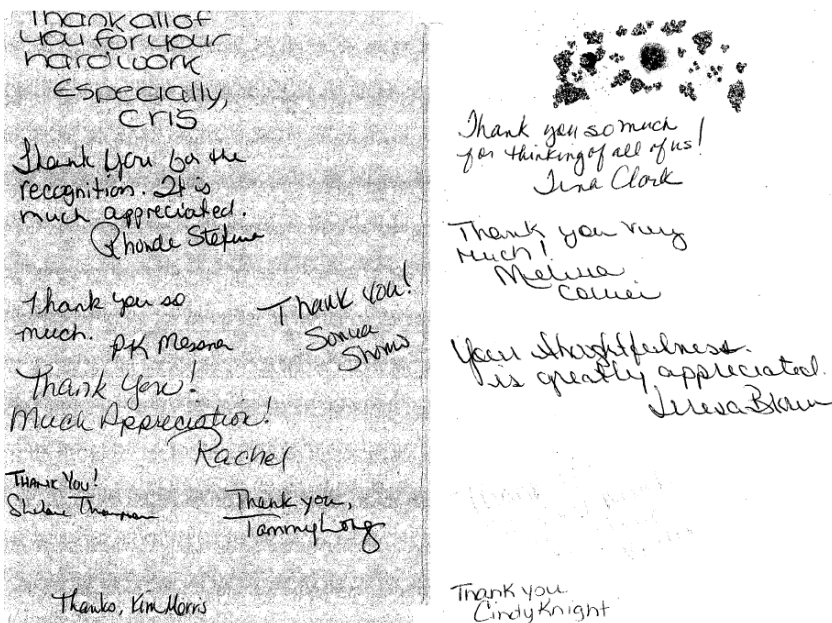
“Just received our check today. Since we are a two person court, we will each be treating ourselves to lunch.”

“Thank you and please extend our gratitude to the Association. They are correct in understanding that all of us have had to deal with sometimes extreme situations, while continuing to negotiate life in general. Folks still got cancer, had babies and lost parents. It’s nice to recognize those that go above and beyond, but it’s also nice let EVERYONE know that their contributions are always appreciated.”

“I want to thank each of you for sharing the kind letter of appreciation, recognizing the efforts, hard work and dedication from the past year given by all Virginia district court employees. The generous gift given to all of the staff is equally appreciated, and accepted. I know my staff will be excited to receive, and plans are already underway to give everyone an opportunity to consider how best to make use of this fit. No doubt, the past year has been extraordinary, with change being the one constant. I’m hopeful that progress is slowly being made to benefit everyone, and that soon, we will be able to make a return to some type of ‘new normal.’ Until then, again, thank you very much for the kind words, and for the generous gift to staff.”

“I wanted to take a moment to thank each of you for your continued commitment. We received our check today and my staff and I thank you very much.”

“I just wanted to express my gratitude for the monetary gift from the District Court Clerk’s Association to allow us to do something special for our staff. That is much appreciated by all.”



Pictured above: The staff of Pulaski GDC enjoying a meal together with funds from the Clerks Association.

Pictured at left, thank you card received from Harrisonburg/Rockingham General District Court.

The current President of the Association of Clerks of the District Courts of Virginia, Rick Kahl, will rotate into the Immediate Past President role when his term ends on June 30, 2021. The Association would like to thank Rick for his service as our President, and we look forward to serving with him as an important advisor to our Executive Council over the next two years. Thank you, Rick!

1. How long have you been Clerk in Roanoke GDC, and what is your favorite part of being a court administrator?

I started as the Clerk with Roanoke City GDC on January 1st, 2012. Each day is uniquely different, and usually presents some unexpected challenge. Then came the pandemic! The best part of being a court administrator is meeting so many wonderful people and having such a great staff.

2. What did you do before joining the Judicial Branch?

I served in law enforcement with the Roanoke City Police Department for 30 years. I retired as a captain in December 2011.

3. What has been the most rewarding part of your service to the Clerk's Association?

The Association has allowed me the opportunity to meet so many outstanding people from around the state. I value the many friendships that have been developed through my connection with the Association.

4. Why would you urge a district court employee to serve in the Association?

If you want to be part of a wonderful organization that gets things done, The Clerk's Association is the place you need to be. Everyone serves on a voluntary basis and demonstrates a passion for making the Clerk's office a better place to work. We recognize people are very busy, but we also must realize if we want to highlight and fix important issues affecting the Clerk's office it requires everyone's involvement. As one voice,



our message and hard work does pay off and we see the benefits.

5. What would you like the Association's legacy to be?

As an Association that gets things accomplished, no matter how many obstacles that must be overcome. During the past couple years, salaries have increased, a CCE & Fellows rewards program has been established, 120 new FTE positions have been approved and new performance appraisals have been designed. The Association is a powerful voice in the District Court system that serves in the "best interest" of the nearly 1,600 court employees throughout the Commonwealth. It's been an honor serving in the Clerk's Association.

6. If you were a legislator for a day, what would you "fix" about the judicial system (court procedure/process or something else)?

I would provide as many "tools" as I could for each Court Administrator so they could perform all their tasks and responsibilities efficiently. Working through a pandemic, while remaining open shows how valuable the 1,600 court employees working in the District Court System are to the judicial system.

7. What is one piece of advice you would offer to every new court employee?

There is so much to learn, but stay calm, be patient and take your time. All the pieces will fall into place and come together. This is a career profession that will have a lot of challenges and as many accomplishments.

8. When do you think you'll know it's time to retire, and how do you plan on spending it?

It's hard to say exactly when it's time to retire. I thoroughly enjoy what I do, so it makes the retirement decision harder. As I get older, I do value "time" more and want to maximize it. When I retire, I plan on traveling and spending a lot of time with my grandchildren.

Acknowledgement in *Virginia Lawyer*, April 2021 edition (reprinted with permission of the Virginia State Bar)

President's Message

by Brian L. Buniva



Kudos to Those Who Take Risks For Us

THERE ARE MORE THAN 2,600 judges, clerks, and magistrates who work in the judicial branch of the Commonwealth. These civil servants work in our 32 general and juvenile court districts, in the 120 courts within our 31 trial court circuits, in the Court of Appeals of Virginia, and in the Supreme Court of Virginia. Add to that number another several hundred deputies serving as courtroom bailiffs, and the number of individuals serving our judicial branch exceeds 3,000.

By the time you read this article, there will have been at least 530,000 deaths suffered due to COVID-19 in our country and approximately 29,700,000 cases of COVID reported. Yet, the individuals working in our judicial system have risen from their beds every workday for the past year and reported to their posts at great risk to their health and the health of their families. Why do they do this? They come to work to keep our courts open during this global pandemic. Their unselfish acts of simply "showing up" and doing their jobs fulfill their solemn commitment to provide access to justice for the public whom they serve. No deputy sheriff, court clerk, judge or magistrate seeks recognition for "doing their duty" or expects to be lauded as a "hero" but heroes are exactly what they are, and it is time that they be recognized as such.

I hope all of you read the January 12, 2021, "Commendation and Proclamation of the Access to Justice Commission of the Supreme Court of Virginia" published in the February 2021 edition of the *Virginia Lawyer*. For those who have not read it yet, I suggest that you do. Allow me to share part of the Commission's proclamation.

After observing that "Access to

Justice" is a fundamental and essential right in a democratic society, the Commission noted that "Access to Justice" is entirely dependent on a functioning court system. The proclamation makes the following points:

- "Whereas a functioning Court System requires the presence, dedication and professionalism of a multitude of Civil Servants, including Clerks, Deputy Clerks and other Clerks' Office Staff; Judges; Judicial Assistants; Guardians Ad Litem; Court Reporters; Foreign Language Interpreters; Magistrates, Sheriffs, Sheriffs' Deputies and other Sheriffs' Office Staff;
- "Whereas the personal interactions required of these Civil Servants to maintain a functioning Court System and provide Access to Justice during the pandemic have exposed them to greater risk of contracting the COVID-19 virus;
- "Whereas notwithstanding the increased risk they faced, these Civil Servants have made, and continue to make, substantial personal sacrifices necessary to keep the Commonwealth's Court System open and functioning, thus ensuring that Access to Justice has been maintained and preserved during the COVID-19 pandemic; . . ."

The Commission's proclamation concludes by honoring these front-line court workers, and "COMMENDS these Civil Servants . . . PROCLAIMS its deep gratitude for their service and ENCOURAGES all, including specifically lawyers and litigants, . . . to take the opportunity to express their admiration and gratitude for the work these Civil Servants have done to maintain a functioning Court System and thereby to preserve Access to Justice for all Virginians."

I ask that the words in the Commission's proclamation be taken to heart by all members of the Bar.

I invite you to put pen to paper and write a short note of gratitude to the members of the Clerks' offices where you practice and remember to say thank you to every clerk and sheriff you encounter in the courthouse each time you are in court. They are important to us all and should be recognized by us individually for their heroic service.

While I am on the subject of gratitude to those who take risks for us all, I would be remiss if I failed to give a "shout out" to the staff of the Virginia State Bar. The adage "overworked and underpaid" clearly applies to this group of public servants. Yet despite the applicability of this phrase, the staff has worked especially hard during this pandemic to ensure that the core functions of the Bar have not skipped a beat.

Finding ways to keep functioning remotely to fulfill its mission to the public and service to lawyers is far from easy. It is much easier in normal times to meet in person than it is to meet virtually given the constraints imposed upon state agencies under the law. Notwithstanding these difficulties, I can attest that the staff has guided the officers and other volunteers in our Bar family through this difficult time. Thank you all.

Last month it was my pleasure to recognize some 13 members of the VSB staff for their length of service ranging from five years to 30 years. All have made immeasurable contributions to our profession, but I wish to single out for your consideration and praise, Maureen Stengel, the Director of Bar Services, who has served us for 30 years. What Maureen accomplishes each year with an undersized staff is simply amazing. Please take the time to thank our staff for all they do for us and the risks they take, especially during this unprecedented health crisis. ☺

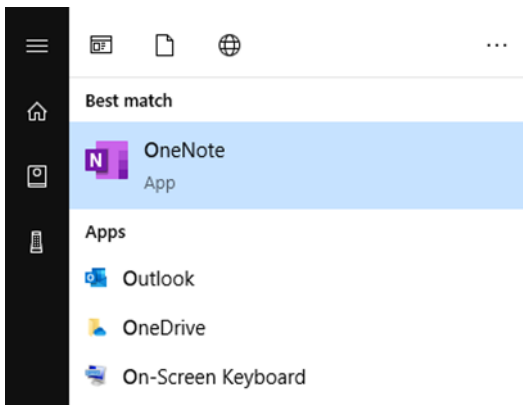
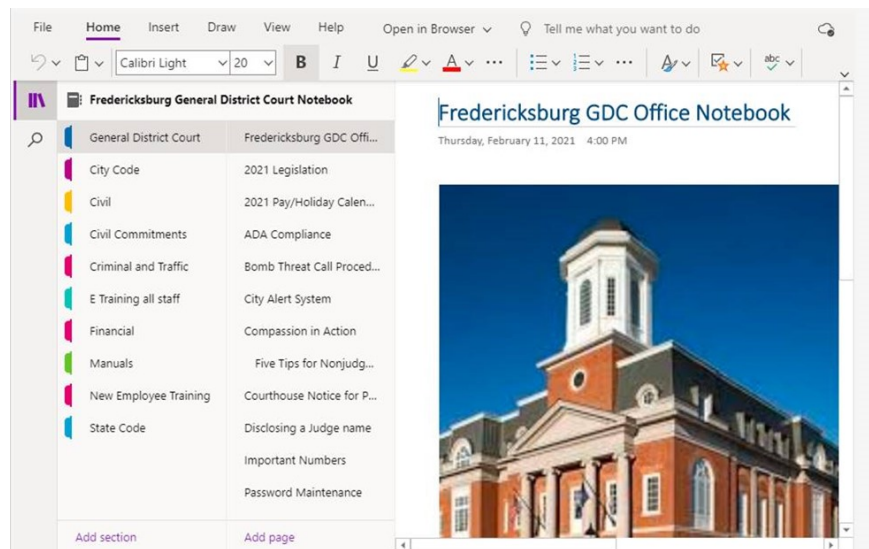
There is an easier way to train new and existing staff. Good news is you already have everything you need!

By: Laura Hatch, Fredericksburg GDC Clerk of Court

So I will say it, onboarding new staff can be one of the most challenging duties as a clerk and supervisor. While short staffed, how do you ensure everyone is receiving the same level of detail and individual attention while being trained? What about your existing staff, are they feeling engaged and able to participate in ongoing training opportunities? How about you, are you able to keep up to date on the latest and greatest with your busy schedule? Believe it or not, you already have a program installed on your computer to help. I have been working for the state for 18 years and let me tell you, it is a game

as a new page there or add an existing OneNote notebook. All office members that have been added to the channel will have full access to the notebook.)

recording. You can actually record instruction materials and attach in the notebook as well. I think this will be an incredible time saver and a



changer.

Microsoft OneNote is a program that works well with Microsoft TEAMS or on your local “N” drive for sharing information immediately with your staff. This program easily organizes notes, weblinks, charts, files and policy/procedures. This makes it the ideal program for an all-in-one office notebook. You can find it under the start menu or in TEAMS just click on the (+) at the top of the page on your general office channel. You can open OneNote

The tabs make it easy to separate content into categories and then you can add sections and sub pages within each tab as you would in a binder. I found it easier to wrap my mind around it by grabbing one of our new hire binders and setting up the tabs to mirror the binder tabs and sections. For pages that I did not have the word document, I utilized scan max. I scanned my instructions and samples as a .pdf and added them in OneNote to the specified pages. You have the option to attach as a file or to attach as a viewable file. To save digital space, consider adding a case number for a sample, vs a scanned page so your staff can open in case management and GDIS scanning. A feature it also has but I have not utilized yet is

huge improvement on the quality of training we provide to our staff.

This new program will make it accessible to your staff, make it easy to update notes in one place and is paperless. So no more bulky binders and outdated single sheets of paper floating around at individual desks. WOW, that alone had me hooked.

Starting day 1, new staff will have instant access to all of the training materials available to them on-demand. This will free up the other staff that are trading water until the new staff is trained. Are you sold yet?

Training videos and instructions are included in the

There is an easier way to train new and existing staff. Good news is you already have everything you need! (cont.)

program. Just open a new page to get started!

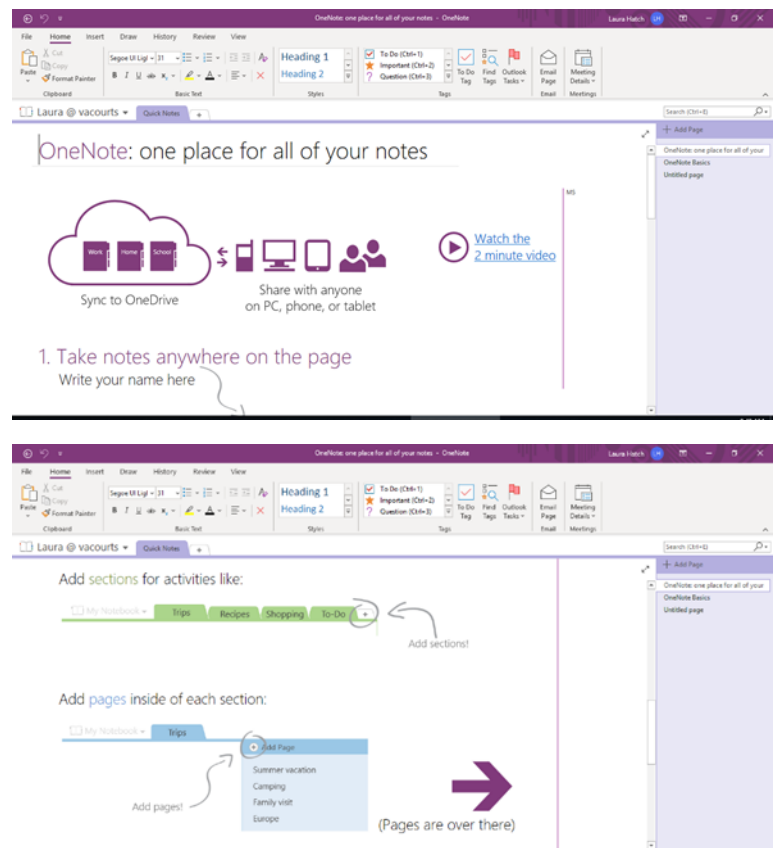
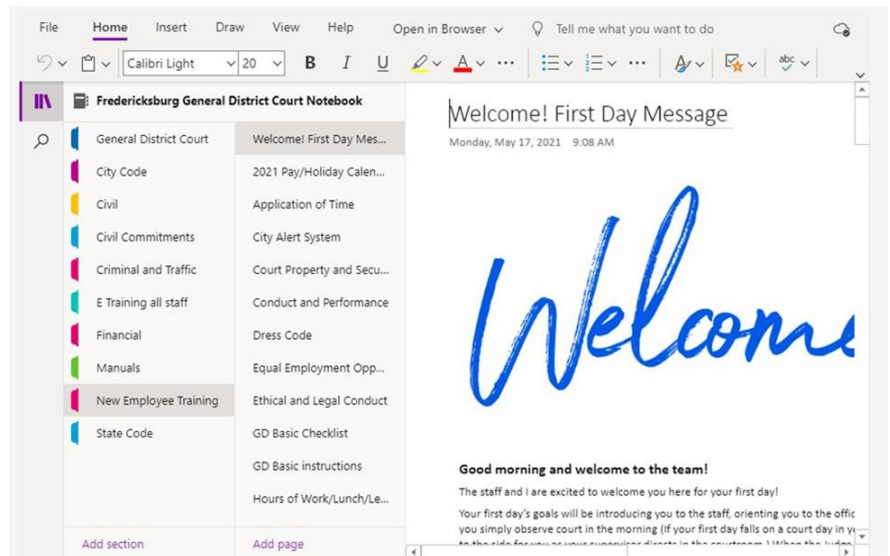
One more thing if I still don't have you completely in love with this concept. I have already done the hard part for you! A sample notebook is set up and ready for you to make it your own if you like. If you feel ambitious feel free to start from scratch. It is really not difficult when you get used to the format. If you can use word, you can use OneNote.

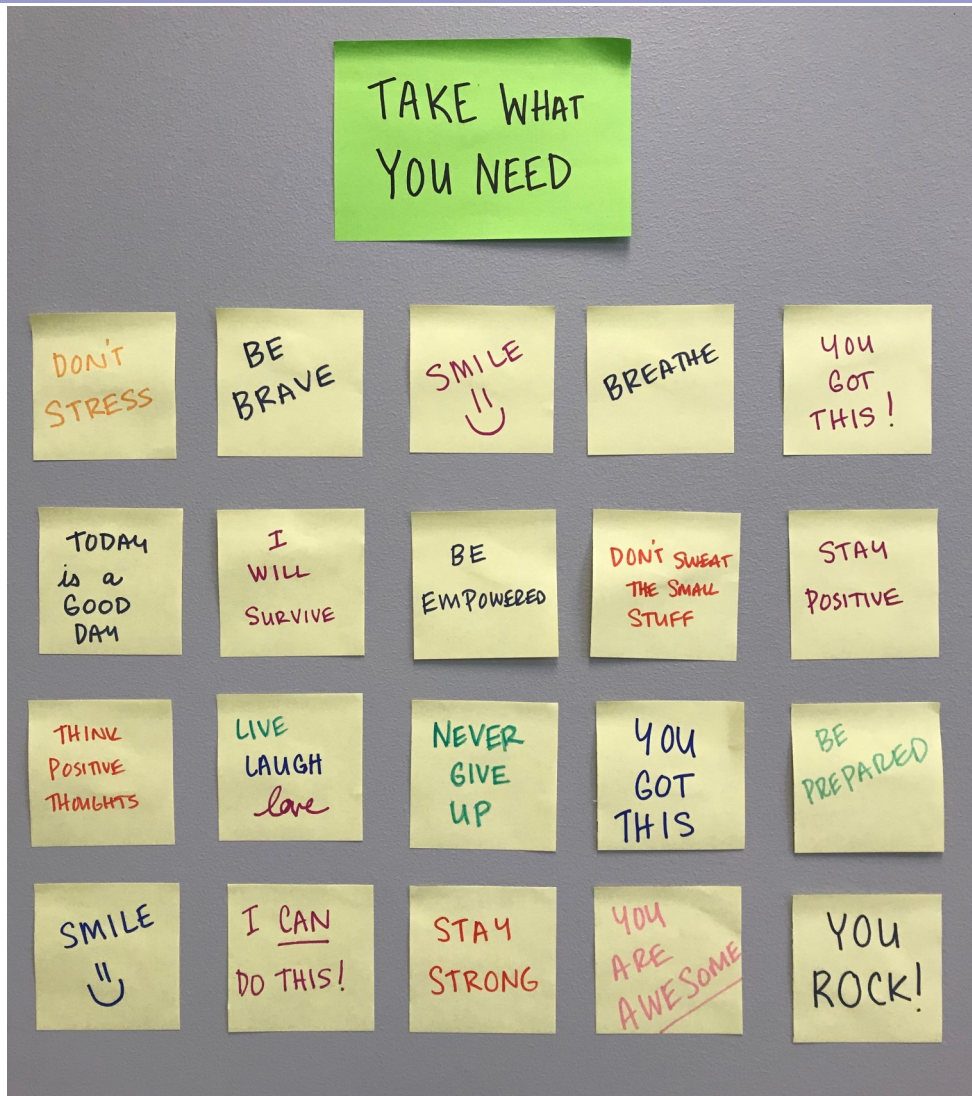
For a sample Notebook. Click on the link below. (approx. 20 min download)

https://vacourts-my.sharepoint.com/:o:/g/personal/lhatch_vacourts_gov/EdvYQyznhr9Mpxz2bVZkAjMB4y3ayXlx4VbrBeMfRn44EQ?e=H4hJSz

I kept the training information for new and existing staff fully functional for you. (note I am a General District Court so the training is geared towards a GD court. You can use it as a model and easily switch it out for the JDR links etc). The tabs and subheads are there as a suggestion for content but you can rename/delete to make it your own!

Remember this program is a tool and will only be as helpful as you make it. Make it a part of your routine to keep it up to date and training relevant and it will be an asset to your office. Wishing you a **less stressful** and **more successful** onboarding process.





(Pictured at left): Fredericksburg GDC had a great idea to post “notes of encouragement” in their office. Thanks to **Laura Hatch**, Clerk of Court, for sharing!

Has your office been creative in boosting morale or participated in something fun as a group? Let us know!

(Pictured below): Chesterfield JDR supervising deputy clerk, **Carrie Warr**, leads a “Lunch Time Connect” chat with everyone in the office daily. A question is posed about a different topic each day and we get to know each other better, especially since some days we don’t even have a chance to say hello to one another because we’re so busy! It’s been a great idea and really nice to see our similarities and differences!

Here are some word search puzzles. You can make your own as well!

Virginia Courthouse Terms

Play Link (online)

<https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/2158495/virginia-courthouses/>

To Print the puzzle

<https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/2158495/virginia-courthouses/downloadable/>

Leadership in the Courts

Play Link

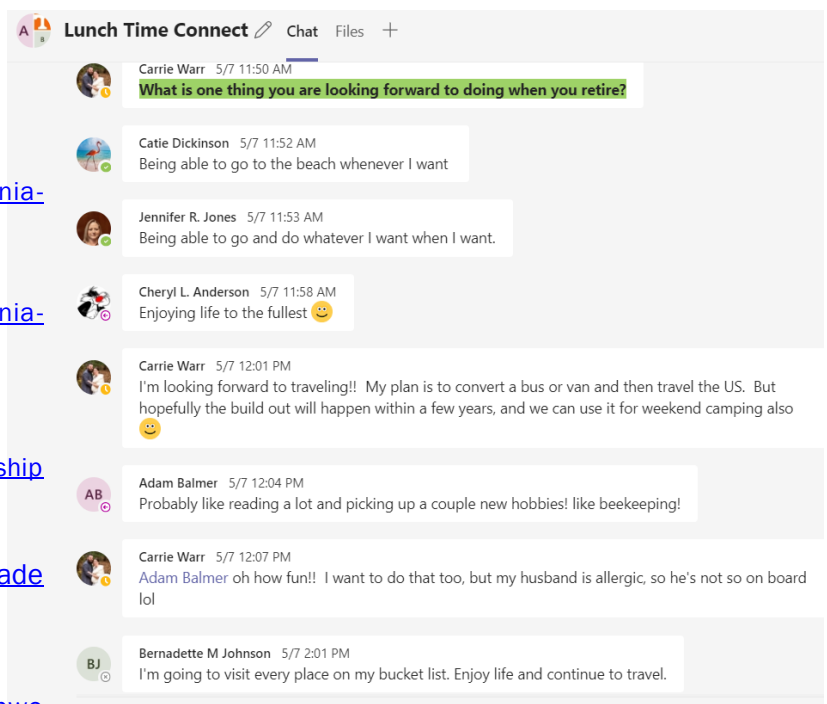
<https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/2158593/leadership-in-courts/>

Print Link

<https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/2158593/leadership-in-courts/downloadable/>

Teamwork

<https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/37769/teamwork/>





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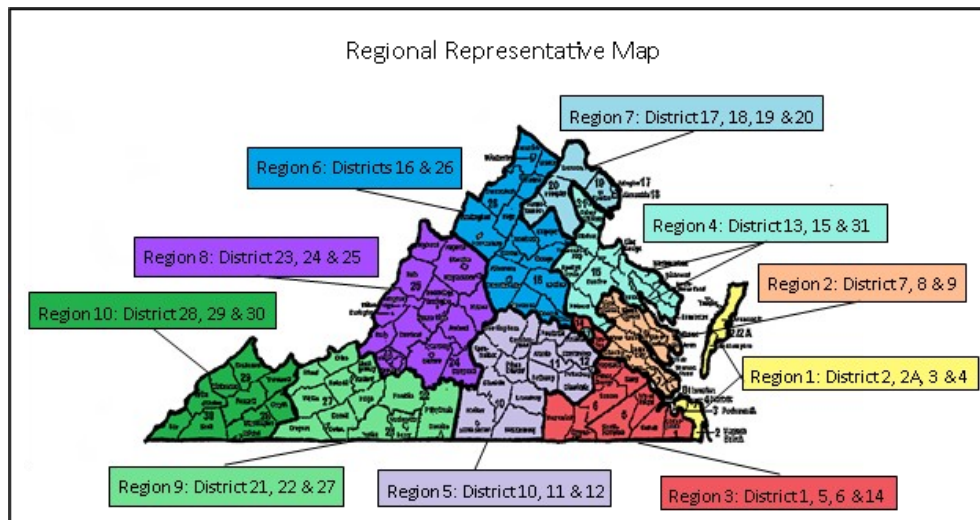
Committee Chairs

Budget & Finance	Amy Burnham & Terri Rea
CATS Manual	Barbara Shaw
Historian	Heather Stevens
Legislative	Barbara Shaw & Ginger Webb
Membership	Laura Griffin
Mentorship	Terri Rea
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Programs	Lindsey Short & Lauren Jones
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Resolutions	Vickie King
Special Issues	Amy Burnham & Terri Rea
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Ways & Means	Lauren Jones

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- ◆ *To foster a closer relationship among the district courts of Virginia*
- ◆ *To improve proficiency and professionalism of court personnel*
- ◆ *To promote uniformity of procedure*
- ◆ *To recommend improved techniques and procedures to more efficiently perform the duties of the Clerk's Office*
- ◆ *To provide educational and training opportunities for all district court employees*
- ◆ *To foster cooperation and understanding between court personnel, judges, the legal community, and others involved with or interested in courts*

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For News and Current Events, please see our website. If you have interest in joining any of our committees, please contact your Regional Representative! Our organization is entirely volunteer-led and requires the participation of any district court employee! Please consider lending your time to your Association!

