



JUSTICE PROGRAMS OFFICE

SCHOOL *of* PUBLIC AFFAIRS

September 2017



New Issue Brief: Reducing Gun Violence

The Justice Programs Office (JPO) recently published a series of issue briefs in partnership with criminal justice organizations that are working at the state level to decrease violent crime. Check out our most recent issue brief, "[Reducing Gun Violence: Strategies for Prosecutors](#)," written in collaboration with the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys.

Visit our [State Administering Agencies Technical Assistance page](#) for issue briefs on prioritizing indigent defense, evidence-based approaches, and cures for recidivism.

State Innovations: Meeting Legal Needs of Crime Victims

JPO's **Practitioner-in-Residence and Director of The Justice in Government Project, Karen Lash**, joined two panels at the August 15-17, 2017 [Victims of Crime Act \(VOCA\) National Training Conference](#) to talk about the latest innovations underway in many states to address the unmet legal needs of crime victims.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) groundbreaking study, [Vision 21 Transforming Victim Services Final Report](#), victims of crime (such as identity theft, consumer fraud, domestic violence, elder abuse, and human trafficking) too often struggle alone with complex legal issues. A single case of victimization "...may produce myriad legal issues for the victim, including orders of protection, victims' rights enforcement, compensation, employment, housing, home foreclosure, spousal support, and child custody, visitation, and dependency."

When [DOJ published a new rule](#) expanding the ways state victims service agencies can use VOCA funds to provide legal services, it was unclear how states would actually innovate. To assist the audience of VOCA administrators' in their brainstorming, Karen explained how a growing number of states – including [Washington](#), Massachusetts, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Vermont – are using VOCA funds to develop statewide models to

enable victims of domestic violence and elder abuse to obtain legal help, no matter their zip code. These statewide approaches help ensure lawyers and paralegals are hired to fill the inevitable legal aid deserts and that they all receive regular trainings, share trends and best practices, provide centralized intake, and generally raise the floor on meeting crime victims' legal needs.

Any states interested in learning more should contact Karen at klash@american.edu.

AJA Conference: Judges as Champions of Right to Counsel

Will you be at the [AJA Conference](#) in Cleveland, Ohio, from September 10-15, 2017? Don't miss the [Right to Counsel National Campaign's](#) plenary session, "Judges as Champions of the Constitutional Right to Counsel," **September 13 at 8:30 am**. Our very own **Senior Policy Counsel Zoë Root, Esq.**, will moderate a panel featuring:

- Brian MacKenzie, Judge (ret.), 52nd District Court, Michigan
- Betty Thomas Moore, Judge, General Sessions Civil Court, Div. 5, Memphis, Tennessee
- Gayle Williams-Byers, Judge, South Euclid Municipal Court, Ohio

Under the Sixth Amendment, the accused in any criminal prosecution has the right to counsel. In 1963 the U.S. Supreme Court held in *Gideon v. Wainwright* that the accused has a right to counsel even if he or she cannot *afford* counsel. Yet there is a divide between the spirit of the Sixth Amendment and *Gideon* ruling and the reality of legal representation for the nation's indigent accused.

Join this session to learn what role judges can play in ensuring the right to counsel, how they can champion the right to counsel, and how to inspire other judges to do the same.

For more information, read the [conference's brochure](#).

New Podcast Episode: *On the Docket with the National Drug Court Resource Center*

In the second episode of *On the Docket with the National Drug Court Resource Center*, we spoke with **Jill Murphy, the program supervisor of the King County Family Treatment Court**. Listen to our podcast for a discussion about:

- how family treatment courts function;
- innovative strategies for working with participants of family treatment courts;
- and how to keep a family-centered approach with involvement from large systems.

You can download and listen to the newest episode in Apple's [iTunes Podcast](#) app.

On the Go: JDTC Training and Technical Assistance Team

In August, the Juvenile Drug Treatment Courts (JDTC) Training and Technical Assistance Project team headed to Leavenworth, Washington, to observe the work being done with NCJFCJ's Learning Collaborative. They found the JDTCs selected to be part of the Learning Collaborative for their innovative ideas were successfully helping the youth enrolled in their programs.

The JDTC Training and Technical Assistance Project team has a busy travel and training schedule coming up this fall. Team members will be presenting OJJDP's **JDTC Guidelines** at a variety of conferences across the country and providing interactive training sessions with JDTCs working to implement these new guidelines.

Find them at the following conferences:

- **September 5-6:** Colorado Administrative Office of the Courts, in collaboration with NCJFCJ
- **September 14:** Annual Oklahoma State Specialty Court Conference
- **October 23-24:** Ohio Annual Specialized Dockets Conference
- **October 26:** Washington Juvenile Drug Court Conference
- **December 6-8:** Annual Tennessee Association of Drug Court Professionals Conference

The Justice Programs Office (JPO), under the School of Public Affairs at American University, is pleased to present its monthly newsletter. Our current initiatives include the National Drug Court Resource, Policy, and Evidence-Based Practice Center, the Right to Counsel (R2C) National Campaign, the Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Training and Technical Assistance Initiative, and Training and Technical Assistance for State Administering Agencies. Please forward this newsletter to your colleagues and partners in the field. If you have been forwarded this email but would like to receive it directly, email justice@american.edu.

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