

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT



Office of Public Information

contact: Marcia McBrien | (517) 373-0129

follow the Office of Public Information on Twitter @CourtInfo

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Court Performance Innovation grant recipients named; projects include human trafficking court, peacemaking court, smart phone apps, social media

LANSING, MI, October 31, 2013 – Combating human trafficking. Peacemaking court. Smart phone apps that let users check in for court hearings. These are just some of the projects that Michigan courts will be pursuing, thanks to grants from the Court Performance Innovation Fund.

The [fund](#), created by the Legislature as part of the FY 2014 budget, supports projects aimed at improving public service and court performance, explained Chief Justice Robert P. Young, Jr. Grants are administered by the State Court Administrative Office, the administrative agency of the Michigan Supreme Court.

“This is an example of courts working smarter for a better Michigan,” Young said. “With these grants, we’re unleashing the trial courts’ creativity. This is research and development funding for the courts. These ideas, if successful, can be emulated by other courts. One court’s innovative idea may be the genesis for a statewide improvement.”

Projects include:

Peacemaking court (Washtenaw Trial Court). Using Native American principles for resolving disputes and addressing offenses against the community, the 22nd Circuit Court will develop a peacemaking court. The project will determine how and if tribal peacemaking principles are transferable to the state court system. Goals include reducing recidivism and improving compliance with court orders.

Human trafficking court (Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor District Courts). Aimed at combating human trafficking, this project involves District Courts 14A, 14B, and 15. Prostitution cases will be reviewed to determine whether the offenders are human trafficking victims; if so, courts will offer services rather than jail time. The courts will also collect human trafficking data, educate the community about human trafficking, and create a model for other courts.

Smart phone apps for court access (Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb Circuit Courts, 63rd District Court in Grand Rapids, and Wayne Probate Court). These courts will use smartphone interface technology to allow attorneys and parties to check in electronically.

Effective use of social media (Muskegon Circuit Court). The court's family division will use technology, including Facebook, Twitter, e-mail, and cell phones, to contact parties, including reminding them about court hearings and child support payments.

Automated income tax garnishment (36th District Court, Detroit). The court will streamline its handling of garnishments. Plans include automating income tax garnishment and exchanging data between the Michigan Department of Treasury and the court.

-MSC-