



2015 JBE ANNUAL REPORT

Judicial Branch Education

It is essential to the public that judges and judicial branch employees continue their education in order to maintain and increase their professional competence, to fulfill their obligations under the Nebraska Revised Code of Judicial Conduct, and to ensure the delivery of quality judicial services to the people of the State of Nebraska. The Office of Judicial Branch Education is designed to provide in-house programming for court staff, probation, and judges with guidance from the Judicial Branch Education Advisory Committee and project leadership from each employee group within the Judicial Branch.

Individuals Who Serve Nebraska Courts

Judicial Branch Education is also tasked with providing education for attorneys in specific areas of the law and for certain individuals who serve the courts in a volunteer capacity or through appointment by the court. Attorneys, registered service providers, interpreters and citizens who volunteer as bailiffs in the courts, as well as others, may obtain the necessary education through the Judicial Branch Education ancillary website at www.jbeinstruction.org.

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Judicial Branch Education

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Overview

2015 was a busy year for JBE to say the least. The year brought about many new staff members to the office. There was ample new legislation to educate on, with the passing of LB605 and to top it all off, we moved out of the Capitol into our own training facility. In January, Chris Thody was hired on as one of the full time Administrative Assistants, Chris tirelessly works on entering the JBE credits and also works to ensure that all of the meeting details are taken care of. In May, Lindsey Carter, came on with JBE as our full time trainer. Lindsey creates online courses and trains on many of the probation topics. Jaime Hegr was hired as the Court Staff Education Director in June. Jaime works with the different education committees to ensure that JBE is providing relevant education for all court staff, she also works on creating online education as well. August brought the last new hire of the year, Jackie Varicak. Jackie, works mostly on the probation trainings, she is always busy printing materials and organizing the many trainings that take place throughout the year. With all of the new staff JBE quickly outgrew our space in the State Capitol Law Library. In late October, JBE packed numerous boxes and moved to the new JBE Training Facility. The new offices have 4 dedicated training spaces each with dedicated screens, speakers and computers to use in the rooms. Along with our dedicated training space we also have 12 offices and space for 5 cubicles. JBE uses 7 of the offices while the Court Improvement Project uses 5 of the offices. The new space has proved to be a wonderful facility for trainings and meetings.



Live Education Overview

JBE provided numerous live education opportunities in 2015. The year started by offering 2 live education days for court staff. One in Omaha and one in Lincoln. 57 staff members attended sessions ranging from customer service and court technology to court structure and guardianships/conservatorships. Also new in 2015 was a day of orientation for new Clerks of the District Court, this orientation coincided with the NACO meeting. In April 40 law clerks, staff attorneys and appellate judges met for their annual meeting. Tom Clancy spoke regarding the 4th Amendment and Kimberly Larson spoke on Juveniles Competence to Stand Trial. May brought the first of two New Employee Orientations, 77 new staff members completed orientation in 2015, during orientation they learn about all aspects of the court system. With the passing of LB605 the June District Judges meeting was a very important education session. 41 judges attended the session held in Lincoln, many discussions were had regarding the new legislation.

In late June, 79 Clerk Magistrates met in Nebraska City for their annual meeting. This year's meeting was held in conjunction with the County Judges Summer Meeting. On the clerks final day of their meeting they were joined by the Judges to discuss and learn about Elder Issues and Guardian/Conservatorships. This proved to be a great opportunity to learn and discuss the issues together. Early October brought 111 judges to La Vista for their annual meeting. 2 separate tracks were provided, one for Juvenile Jurisdiction Judges and the other for all remaining judges. Another new meeting held in 2015 was a Fall Court Reporter meeting. This meeting was held at the same time as the Judges Meeting in La Vista. 49 court reporters attended a day long education session. This meeting was very well received and they thoroughly enjoyed their session with State Court Administrator Corey Steel. JBE held 2 sessions of New Judge Orientation and also sent 3 judges to the General Jurisdiction course in Reno, NV. Overall 2015 was a very busy year for live education, however our distance learning courses and webinars kept JBE busy as well.

Distance Learning

Distance learning provides JBE with the ability to reach all staff statewide using webinars and online courses through the nebraskajbe.org website. In 2015 JBE hosted 35 webinars for court and probation staff. E-Notice and LB605 were the most viewed webinars. Over 2,000 staff members viewed live webinars while about 1,800 viewed the archived webinars. Not only do we offer webinars but we also offer online courses that offer more interactivity for the participant. In 2015 JBE added an online ethics course that is required of all new staff working in the court system. Also added is a course showing new staff how to access the JUSTICE Procedure Manuals. This course shows the staff how and where to access the manuals and then requires them to search the manuals and respond to questions within the course. This course has been very well received by both new and existing staff.

JUSTICE Training

While the procedures manual course is great for staff when they first begin employment, nothing can take the place of live JUSTICE training. Our JUSTICE trainer Laurayne Hall trained 139 county court staff and 165 district court staff throughout 2015. In addition to those staff she also trained 42 court staff on Probate Docket and 38 staff members on Juvenile Docket. Most trainings were held in Lincoln, Omaha or North Platte, however trips were made to Alliance, Broken Bow and Norfolk as well. Also created in 2015, with the collaboration of JBE and the JUSTICE BA's, was the JUSTICE Minute. This is a new process regarding how court staff are notified of changes within the JUSTICE system. When a change within JUSTICE takes place JBE is notified by the JUSTICE BA's. JBE takes the information and creates a short tutorial showing the change within the system and how it will affect court staff. The JUSTICE Minutes are emailed out to staff and are also housed on the JBE website for reference. Once again the changes have been well received.

Probation Education

79 probation officers completed their 8 weeks of live training as well as their numerous online courses. Not only are new officers completing mandatory training but existing staff must also complete mandatory courses. Many times throughout the year courses are provided and required of all current officers. In 2015 officers were required to complete an LS/CMI Booster training in which they attended a webinar and then viewed and scored recorded interviews. The new training facility will allow for probation trainings in a central location without having to rely on finding event or office space. This will be a much more efficient and cost effective process for everyone involved.

External Website

Not only does JBE stay busy with education for court staff but we are also working on education for those who serve the courts as well. The jbeinstruction.org website has been very busy. Attorneys have been working on the GAL and Bridge to Independence courses that are offered, 30 volunteer bailiffs have completed Jury Management training while Registered Service Providers for probation are completing a mandatory training on the Standardized Model. The Office of the Public Guardian has also been utilizing the website to host courses for the Court Visitor Program. This external website has proven to work well for many different divisions of the court.

JBE Advisory Committee

2015 was a busy year full exciting changes and we would like to thank those who serve on the JBE Advisory Board for the continued effort toward making judicial branch education an important part of working in the Judicial Branch.

Justice William Connolly – Nebraska Supreme Court

Judge Mike Pirtle – Nebraska Court of Appeals

Judge John Colborn – Lancaster County District Court

Judge Douglas F. Johnson – Douglas County Separate Juvenile Court

Judge Alan Brodbeck – Holt County Court

Judge Laureen Van Norman – Workers Compensation Court

Gretchen Wiebe – Clerk Magistrate – McCook

Vickie Prince – Clerk of the District Court – Pierce

Jodi York – Chief Probation Officer – Papillion

Kristine Riekenberg – Official Court Reporter – Beatrice



Gerrard Training Room During A Commission Meeting



Heavican Training Room During A Probation Training



Brodbeck Training Room



Brokofsky Board Room During JUSTICE Training

2015 Quick Facts

- ◇ 35 Hosted Webinars
- ◇ 2,163 Viewed Live
- ◇ 1,824 Viewed Archived Webinars
- ◇ 139 County Court Justice Trainees
- ◇ 165 District Court JUSTICE Trainees
- ◇ 79 New Probation Officers in NPOT
- ◇ 77 New Court Staff Through New Employee Orientation