

THE OACA INQUIRER

Volume 3, Issue 3

OHIO ASSOCIATION FOR COURT ADMINISTRATION, INC.



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Save the Date!

The 2011 OACA Spring Conference is scheduled for May 11-13, along the shores of Lake Erie at the Crowne Plaza Downtown Cleveland. Human Resource Consultant Gar Trusley will present *Motivating and Rewarding Employees in Tough Economic Times* and Kim Vanover Riley will present an HR and personnel law update. Keep your eye on the OACA website for more specifics, registration information and links.

ABOUT OACA

The Ohio Association for Court Administration is a professional organization of court managers who are committed to excellence. The association was established in 1973, and the current membership consists of 231 members from all Ohio court jurisdictions, as well as members of court-related agencies. OACA is a member organization of the National Association for Court Management.

OACA Goals:

- Enhance professional development
- Encourage solidarity
- Improve administration of justice
- Provide legislative and policy updates
- Encourage diversity
- Anticipate and meet the challenges
- Provide conferences with quality education

OACA Member Benefits:

- Member newsletters
- Association website
- Legislative and policy updates
- Conferences
- Networking
- Mentor programs
- CEU and CLE opportunities
- Scholarship programs

2011 OACA Conferences:

May 11-13, 2011
Cleveland

October 19-21, 2011
Columbus

WINTER 2010 NEWSLETTER

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Message From OACA's President



Dear Colleagues,

I am honored and humbled to have been elected to serve the Ohio Association for Court Administration as your president for 2011. Having served the association through the various offices over the past few years, I have had the privilege of working with several of our excellent past presidents who have led this organization and maintained the fine traditions of excellence in court administration that our association promotes. What has become apparent to me over these years is that this association excels as a result of the efforts and hard work of its officers and committee chairs, as well as our outstanding members who volunteer their time to guide the group, form our strategic agendas and most significantly, plan and deliver two excellent conferences each year.

I have worked in court administration for the past 10 years. During this time, OACA has helped me develop professionally and has put me in touch with so many peers who have generously shared their knowledge and wisdom. It has been my pleasure to see our association grow over the past few years to nearly 300 members. I would like to personally thank our executive board and Immediate Past President Don Colby for their leadership and ongoing contributions to our association's mission.

Through our involvement in the National Association for Court Management, I have come to appreciate the value of OACA's support for the court administration profession throughout Ohio. Our association, despite budget cuts throughout Ohio courts (and government in general), continues to thrive and provide quality professional

development opportunities for our members. Unlike other states whose association memberships have declined, ours has continued to grow. More and more, judges are seeing the value in having professional management in our courts and more of our members becoming Certified Court Managers throughout the state. With this said, enclosed you will find an invitation to join/renew your membership in OACA and gain benefits to assist you in these hard economic times.

Please know that OACA values the feedback of our members. We diligently read surveys received at the end of our conferences and look for ways to improve. In 2010, we experimented with scaling back our conferences to a two-day format, which would save some costs for overnight stays for our members. Although our 2010 conferences were well-attended, your feedback indicated that the schedule was not ideal. As a result, we are returning to the three-day format for our conferences in 2011. We encourage you to continue to let our executive board know how we can best serve you.

Also coming soon in 2011, you will see a new look and feel to OACA's website. We will also explore other methods, such as social networking, to best communicate with our members.

I hope to see all of you at our upcoming conferences. Our spring conference is May 11-13 in Cleveland. Our fall conference is at the Ohio Judicial Center in Columbus from October 19-21.

Again, thank you for allowing me to serve the OACA this year. If I, or any of our officers, may be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
Kenneth R. Teleis
OACA 2011 President

Members of the 2011 Executive Committee



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Members' Corner

- On behalf of the membership, the Executive Board would like to thank OACA Past President, Court Administrator Don Colby of the Lucas County Court of Common Pleas, for his leadership and direction over the past year.
- The membership offers its congratulations to Doug Stephens, former director of The Supreme Court of Ohio Judicial & Court Services, on his retirement.
- Congratulations to Tim Lubbe, court administrator of the Lorain County Court of Common Pleas, on his acceptance to the ICM Fellows Program at the National Center for State Courts.
- The membership sends its warmest wishes and hopes for a speedy recovery and wellness to OACA Past President Kim Switzer, director of court services from the Hancock County Court of Common Pleas, and to Linda Lovelace, court administrator of the Butler County Area Courts.
- Congratulations to the following OACA members who have been accepted to the Tier II Court Management Program, Class of 2013: Sylvia Argento, Andrew Bauer, Melinda Brooks, Nick Cindric, Lori Clune, Don Colby, Laura Coleman, Vicky Dailey, Sharon Danko, Tammy Wurthmann Dwyer, Debra Egbert, Lisa Falgiano, Lori Henry, Melissa Knopp, Michael Kochera, Sandra Kuhar, Michele Mihalick, Keitsa Miles, Mike Negray, Steffanie Sawmiller, Doug Schonauer, Jeannie Shridner, Jennifer Shunk, Elizabeth Stephenson and Stacy Worthington.
- Dawn Bailey, court administrator from the Shelby County Probate/Juvenile Court, has joined the Membership Committee.
- Jason Hill, assistant court administrator from the Sixth District Court of Appeals, has joined the Education Committee.

In Memory: Pauline "Polly" Richter

Long-time OACA member Pauline "Polly" Richter, retired administrator for the Eleventh District Court of Appeals, passed away on September 28, 2010. Polly remained a member of the association following her retirement in 1989 and rarely missed a conference since that time. The association delivered an arrangement to Polly's family at the time of her passing.

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OACA News

During the Fall 2010 OACA Conference in Worthington, the membership voted for officers of the Board of Trustees, including two newly-created At-Large Trustee positions. The officers for 2011 are:

President - **Ken Teleis**, Court Administrator, Summit County Domestic Relations Court
President-Elect - **Sylvia Agrento**, Court Administrator, Tuscarawas County Probate/Juvenile Court
Treasurer - **Michael Kochera**, Court Administrator, Canton Municipal Court
Secretary - **Scott McVey**, Court Administrator, Warren County Court of Common Pleas
At-Large Trustee - **Tim Lubbe**, Court Administrator, Lorain County Court of Common Pleas
At-Large Trustee - **Marcia Cave**, Court Administrator, Licking County Domestic Relations Court
Immediate Past President - **Don Colby**, Court Administrator, Lucas County Court of Common Pleas

Also during the Fall Conference, the inaugural Thomas J. Moyer Memorial Scholarship Fund was awarded to Michael E. Kochera of the Canton Municipal Court. The scholarship was created in memory of Chief Justice Thomas J. Moyer and his legacy of continued education and professional development of court professionals. The scholarship, in the amount of \$1,000, may be used for any judicial or court-related professional development opportunities. Additional information regarding the Thomas J. Moyer Memorial Scholarship can be found at <http://www.ohiocourtadministration.org/moyer.htm>.

The 2010 OACA Strategic Planning Session was held December 10, 2010 at the Ohio Judicial Center. The Annual Strategic Planning Meeting is open to all OACA members and provides a forum to examine where we are as an association, assess the needs of the membership, and develop short-term and long-term goals. This one-day event has also proved an integral piece in the transition between out-going and newly-elected officers. Thanks to The Supreme Court of Ohio for serving as host and to all who contributed and attended.

Behind the Scenes

KUDOS to all the hard work from OACA'S committee chairs and members!

Education Committee
Elizabeth Stephenson and Linda Lovelace, Co-Chairs
 Ken Kuckuck
 Connie Neil
 Don Colby
 Angie House
 Marc Warner
 Jason Hill

Membership Committee
Lori A. Henry, Chair
 Penny McGuire
 Pat Schwartz
 Marc Warner
 Cheri Shaw
 Katherine Curfman
 Tammy Flannery
 Dawn Bailey

By-Laws
Bennett Manning, Chair
 Elizabeth Stephenson
 Linda Lovelace

Legislative Committee
Tim Lubbe, Chair
 Michael Kochera
 Stephanie Hess
 Jo Ellen Cline, *ex officio*

Conference Site Committee
Laura McLaughlin, Chair
 Margaret R. Allen
 Sara Stiffler
 Katrina M. Webb

Mentor Orientation
Pam Roberts, Chair
 Jean Atkin
 Sylvia Argento
 Becky Carpenter
 Andrew Bauer

Archival/Historian
Tammy Dwyer, Chair
 Mike Durbin
 Sylvia Argento
 Cheri Shaw
 Melinda Cooper

Administrative Support
Linda Lovelace, Chair
 Greg Popovich
 Kimberly Switzer
 Lori Clune
 Ken Teleis

Nominating Committee
Lori Clune, Chair
 Elizabeth Stephenson

Finance Committee
Sylvia Argento, Chair
 Andrew Bauer
 Lori Clune
 Don Colby
 Ken Teleis

Brochure Committee
Chair Needed
 Elizabeth Stephenson
 Kimberly Switzer

Vendor Show Committee
Chair Needed
 Paula Houston
 Kathleen Hanners

Communications Committee
Chair Needed
 Paula Houston

OAM Fall Conference: Maintaining Harmony in the Workplace

Presenter: Dr. Roger Hall, Hancock County Court of Common Pleas

By Melinda A. Cooper, Court Administrator, Fifth District Court of Appeals

Dr. Roger Hall's presentation at the OACA Spring seminar was such a great success that he was asked to speak again at the Fall seminar. His presentation was entitled, *Maintaining Harmony in the Workplace*. He began his presentation with a great reminder: Education without execution is just entertainment. Dr. Hall was very entertaining, and his presentation was filled with useful, helpful information.

According to Dr. Hall, success requires managing people. He posed a thought I suspect all of us have had, "My job would be so easy if I just didn't have these people to deal with!" He asserted that communication is the key that leads to success. He reminded us that as humans, we are mammals and predators by nature. We can be more like sharks that will bite each other to the point that they become bait themselves or we can be more like wolves, who only thrive if they cooperate. In a wolf pack there is one dominant wolf and the pack communicates and coordinates with each wolf, with each wolf having his or her own role. He suggested that such a model is very productive for humans as well. He directed us to research that showed that communication is not only the key in business but is a key indicator of whether a marriage will succeed. Interestingly, it did not matter so much if the communication was positive or negative, just so there was communication.

He did point out some problems that communication will not fix. He suggested that if there really are personality conflicts, priority conflicts (as to what we value and how we value things like work product or important issues in our life), competency issues, moral conflicts or organizational conflicts due to the organizational structure, better communication will not necessarily resolve the problem. However, Dr. Hall thought that most problems could be solved through better communication.

He suggested we pay attention to both verbal

and nonverbal communication. In fact, the longer we know a person, the stronger the nonverbal feelings get. This is why we sometimes feel like we can read each other like a book. He also pointed out that we must be careful not to over-interpret or misinterpret nonverbal communication. Sometimes one must ask questions to determine whether we are correctly interpreting the nonverbal cues we are receiving. But as some of you may have learned the hard way, we must ask "nicely." In making his point, he stated that many times the emotion we see in a person may not be the emotion they are actually feeling. It is simply the emotion they are displaying.

Dr. Hall provided several tips or principles for resolving a conflict. One tip was that "honesty for the sake of honesty" is not necessarily a good idea. He asked the audience to consider the difference between honesty and candor. He suggested that the expression of honest anger should be done only if it is productive—it should be true and it should be of benefit to the other person. On the other hand, the cathartic expression of anger, even if presented in a sense of honesty, only makes more anger. We should ask ourselves, "If this does not help the other person, should I keep it to myself?" He stated that choosing to keep anger to oneself is not dishonest, it is just not candid. While negative emotions have a value and purpose, one should be disciplined in their anger.

Dr. Hall also provided suggestions on how to handle conflict with coworkers. He feels that lighthearted criticism works better than sharp criticism. People feel less attacked when there is a lighthearted sense to the criticism. He also pointed out that responding to criticism with defensiveness invites further criticism. Some people respond to criticism by withdrawing—they go off and mutter to themselves. Dr. Hall warned us that withdrawing leads to bitterness. Bitterness, in turn, leads to contempt. Contempt is "bitter rehearsal" where we practice and prepare our anger or hatred. He said we can all tell when someone is showing contempt

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through a classic giveaway; they roll their eyes and pull back their lips.

As always, Dr. Hall presented more information than could ever be summarized in one article. However, one last point he made was that bonding and engaging in joint social activities will not fix a problem alone. A team needs mutual interdependence. When a group attempts to solve problems together or works together on a legitimate, mutual adversity, a team is formed. Generally, bickering is reduced or eliminated when members of the group must depend on each other.

OAM Fall Conference: *Excelling in Changing Times: Taking Performance to the Next Level*

Presenter: *Dr. Brenda J. Wagenknecht-Ivey, President, PRAXIS Consulting, Inc.*

By *Lori A. Henry, Court Administrator, Medina Municipal Court*

The purpose of the session was to encourage us to think differently about how we do our work and to take with us practical ideas that would result in greater efficiencies, better service and improved teamwork, which ultimately improves our organizational performance.

One way she taught this was very visual. She asked two groups of eight people to stand shoulder-to-shoulder facing each other. She then instructed the participants to hold hands with someone in the circle. Once all hands were intertwined she asked the groups to work together to get to their simplest form while still holding hands. In addition to being a little workout, it was a very interesting task to demonstrate how important collaboration and communication are in managing a task.

Ms. Wagenknecht-Ivey focused on the 7 Keys to Taking Performance to the Next Level:

- 1.** Inspire through a clear purpose and compelling vision
- 2.** Establish and show progress on BHAGs (big, hairy, audacious goals)
- 3.** Build a nimble and responsive organization (or team)
- 4.** Create a culture of innovation and engagement
- 5.** Continually improve what you do and how you do it
- 6.** Don't go it alone – collaborate with others in new ways
- 7.** Be relentless; don't take no – or that's impossible – for an answer

A Look Back at the OACA Fall Conference



Clockwise, starting in top left corner: Steven C. Hollon, Esq., administrative director of The Supreme Court of Ohio, gives an Ohio Courts Update; Past President Don Colby addresses OACA Fall Conference attendees; Past President Don Colby congratulates Doug Stephens, former director of The Supreme Court of Ohio Judicial & Court Services Division, on his retirement; Past President Don Colby receives a plaque for his service from President Ken Teleis.

2012
OACA
Conference
Locations:

Spring 2012
Canton

Fall 2012
Columbus

Hope to
see you
there!

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A Look Back at the OACA Fall Conference (Continued from Page 7)



Clockwise, starting in top left corner: New members of the OACA Executive Committee are sworn in; New members of the OACA Executive Committee with former Chief Justice Eric Brown of The Supreme Court of Ohio; Steven C. Hollon, Esq., administrative director of The Supreme Court of Ohio, talks with Atiba Jones, executive director of the Franklin County Common Pleas Court; Melinda Cooper, court administrator for the Fifth District Court of Appeals, introduces Dr. Roger Hall; Sylvia Argento, court administrator of Tuscarawas County Probate/Juvenile Court; Attendees network during break.