

Delivering our Message:
Court Communication Plan for the Judicial Branch
YEAR TWO REPORT

*Prepared by: Florida Supreme Court Public Information Office
Submitted July 12, 2018*

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Year Two Implementation Report

Background:

Delivering Our Message / Court Communication Plan for the Judicial Branch of Florida took effect in January 2016 after unanimous approval by the Florida Supreme Court in December 2015. The plan was developed with input from judges, court public information officers (PIOs), other court staff from around the state, and experts from the private sector. It was submitted to the Court by the Judicial Management Council, a longstanding state court advisory body that includes judges, lawyers, and non-lawyers. The JMC designed the plan to help Florida's courts, no matter what their size or local circumstances, in improving communications with all the people they serve.

Implementing the plan today involves court staff in the twenty Judicial Circuits, the five District Courts of Appeal, the Office of the State Courts Administrator (OSCA), and the Florida Supreme Court. These staff are members of a statewide nonprofit professional association, the [Florida Court Public Information Officers](#) (FCPIO), which was given responsibility to implement the plan. FCPIO actively participated in preparing this report. Members and other court staff meet annually for an educational conference and hold regular monthly conference calls to work together to advance communications goals outlined in the plan. FCPIO's last

annual conference was in April 2018, and it has continued to hold monthly meetings since that time discussing issues outlined in this report.

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS COURT PUBLIC INFORMATION?

Courts have a critical interest in increasing public trust and confidence as they fulfill their core role – delivering fair and impartial justice. But in today’s world it is no longer enough simply to produce fair and impartial results. Courts also must be *seen* to deliver fair and impartial justice. In other words, public perception is a crucial element. If courts deliver fair and impartial justice but no one is aware of it, then public trust and confidence will erode based on simple lack of knowledge.

This conclusion is based on principles outlined by then-Chief Justice Jorge Labarga in a *Florida Bar Journal* article¹ where he noted that justice not only must be done – but it also must be *seen* to be done. It is no coincidence that Chief Justice Labarga’s article was quoting from well-established caselaw stretching back to the famous and much-cited English decision, *Rex v. Sussex Justices*.² In sum, public perception is a critical element of public trust and confidence in the Twenty-First Century. That is why court PIO duties today involve a wide range of information and outreach services designed to address these perceptions.

Court PIOs in Florida serve as liaisons between the judiciary and the public and can be found at every level of the court system. Although duties can vary considerably across the state, Florida PIOs are generally responsible for media and public records requests, website content management, tours and educational outreach programs, and social media management. Florida court PIOs are expected to handle crisis and emergency communications and high-profile case management as well. A court PIO works with judges, court employees, lawyers, educators and students, litigants, community and Bar leaders, the media, and the public. As the field of communications changes rapidly, court PIOs in some parts of Florida also are being delegated new duties such as podcasting and video production, smartphone app development, computerized graphic design for websites and social media, and specialized event planning.

¹ Labarga, [Justice Must Be Seen: Implementing Florida’s New State Courts Communication Plan](#), Fla. Bar J., June 2016.

² *Rex v. Sussex Justices, Ex Parte McCarthy*, 1 KB 256 (1924) (source of the legal aphorism, “Not only must Justice be done; it must also be seen to be done.”).

High-profile case management deserves special comment. Florida has had an unusually large number of legal cases that attracted national or worldwide media attention. Examples start with the unrelenting scrutiny Florida state courts endured in the fall of 2000 with the various trial and appellate cases now known as *Bush v. Gore*, which helped decide the outcome of a presidential election. But there also were many other cases across the state that attracted so much attention that they forced chief judges and court administrators to assign special media management duties to staff. Their case names became household phrases – names like Terri Shiavo, George Zimmerman, and Casey Anthony.

These types of courtroom events can be so disruptive and require such specialized knowledge that FCPIO provides training and support services focused just on handling notorious cases. Managing very high-profile cases is counterintuitive and requires careful study before the crisis strikes. The benefits of this focused training are shown by the fact that Florida – despite attracting so many of these cases – has not experienced any that devolved into a “media circus” like what happened with the trial of O.J. Simpson in 1994-1995. It is to Florida’s credit that its communications techniques have maintained order and decorum in trial and appellate proceedings despite a commitment to let cameras into our courtrooms since the 1970s.

THE FIELD OF COURT COMMUNICATIONS

The shift in communications from print-based to technology-driven media is transforming the work of court PIOs. This change is happening at the same time that traditional news media are shrinking and their coverage of the courts is diminishing. There is a pressing need for courts to move into that gap by providing more and better information directly to the public.

In many ways, the Twenty-First Century has become the century of communications. New methods of communications now dominate public debate, drive public policy development, sway political trends, and help steer the American economy. Older methods of communications are dying away or moving into an inferior role in society and the marketplace.

In response, government offices now understand that they must use the new communication methods and outreach tools to connect directly with the public.

The goal is to promote transparency and accountability, persuade opinion leaders, and replace information no longer available by more traditional means.

Today, Florida's courts are at the forefront of the national response to these changes. They are moving into video and podcast production, social media management, smartphone app development, and other web-based or technology-driven outreach solutions. While not all courts have the dedicated resources to fully exploit new technology, courts as a whole are major making strides to use Twenty-First Century communication tools in a direct dialogue with the public. They are bypassing the media filter that dominated communications in the last century.

Florida's Communication Plan strongly encourages courts to develop new ways to maintain credibility as trustworthy sources of information in a society that is more and more distrustful of all institutions. Studies underscore the need for an increased emphasis on education and outreach. In its 2017 national survey, the National Center for State Courts³ found continuing public skepticism about the courts:

- 47% of respondents believe that judges in their state courts make decisions based on their own beliefs and political pressures.
- 53% believe that too many judges in their state courts are there because of personal connections or political influence rather than their qualifications for the job.
- 60% of all respondents (78% of African American respondents) believe that too many judges in their state courts don't understand the challenges facing people who appear in their courtrooms and need to do a better job of getting out into the community and listening to people.

It is important for people to understand the courts and the challenges courts face. Increasing and improving communication methods and community outreach efforts will help educate the public about the crucial role courts play in society during changing times.

YEAR TWO: DELIVERING OUR MESSAGE

The Year Two Implementation Report focuses on duties of court PIOs. Trial court PIOs completed a survey (Attachment A), and results (Attachment B) were discussed at the FCPIO annual conference in April 2018.

³ [2017 The State of the State Courts Poll](#), National Center for State Courts.

The purpose of the survey is to better understand the impact of the plan by examining public information duties performed by PIOs and court staff across the state. The results will guide FCPIO's development of a PIO toolkit to assist state courts with these duties, as its members continue implementation of the Communication Plan.

It is clear from the results that courts are doing everything they can to support the plan. However, due to resource constraints, some courts are restricted to the bare minimum, mostly performing public information duties when needed. Some of Florida's urban circuits, however, are demonstrating remarkable creativity as they find new ways to meet today's challenges within the resources they already have.

Who are Florida's PIOs?

Six circuits (6, 7, 11, 13, 17, & 20), the Florida Supreme Court, and the OSCA employ full-time, dedicated personnel to handle public information duties. The Supreme Court and the Eleventh Judicial Circuit (Miami-Dade County) have offices with more than one position. Titles for each full-time PIO position vary and include Director of Public Information, Director of Office of Government Liaison & Public Relations, Public Information Officer, and Communications Specialist. Fourteen circuits divide PIO duties among staff and work within limited resources to handle media and public relations. Many courts also pull in other support staff as needed. In the Florida Supreme Court, for example, the Library staff has become a critical part of Facebook management by providing articles and photographs about historical materials in the Court's archives.

The number of current FCPIO members is nearly 50. They come from the 27 court divisions (20 circuits, five districts, OSCA, and the Supreme Court) that have designated PIOs under current membership guidelines. This may look like a larger number than expected. However, the number can be explained by the fact that many circuits now appoint more than one person as a PIO either in a backup role or because workload is spread among several personnel who have other primary duties and spend only a portion of overall work on PIO duties. Their designation as PIOs qualifies them to become FCPIO members and to attend the annual communications training sessions the association has produced for many years now.

Moreover, the number of FCPIO members has risen over time as courts throughout the state have recognized the value of staff receiving specialized training. That way, trained staff are available when needed to perform PIO work. Judges also

sometimes participate in the annual conferences, though their numbers are not counted in membership totals.

PIOs in the Trial Courts:

- Six circuits have full-time, dedicated positions.
- Fourteen (14) circuits designate staff to handle limited PIO duties.
 - Seven (7) Trial Court Administrators (TCA) with one or more staff members assisting with PIO duties
 - One (1) Director of Community Relations with Chief Deputy Court Administrator assisting
 - One (1) Senior Staff Attorney with staff assisting
 - One (1) Assistant Director of Court Operations with staff assisting
 - One (1) General Counsel
 - One (1) Court Technology Officer
 - One (1) Administrative Services Manager
 - One (1) Court Operations Consultant

PIOs in the Appellate Courts:

- Each District Court of Appeal marshal serves as PIO.
- The Supreme Court Public Information Office includes a dedicated PIO/communications counsel and two additional full-time positions.
- The OSCA's PIO performs media relations as well as participating in communications responsibilities for outreach to the public and the legislature.

COMMUNICATING USING SOCIAL MEDIA

Florida Courts are more frequently using social media for communication, education and outreach, crisis management, and case-related postings. Today, Florida courts most commonly use Twitter or have a Twitter account to use in an emergency such as unexpected court closures caused by storms. More courts are establishing a presence on Facebook, and six circuits use both. Other platforms in limited use are LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube. A listing of social media platforms used by courts is posted on <http://www.flcourts.org>.

While more courts are using social media than ever, concerns about their use remain. An ever-changing social-media landscape, ongoing litigation, and evolving ethical standards mean that PIOs and courts must remain flexible and attuned to

new circumstances and guidance. Social media discussions occur during monthly FCPIO conference calls or via the FCPIO email listserv that reaches all of the organization's members. Florida PIOs work closely with OSCA's General Counsel for legal guidance and direction and with OSCA's General Services office for emergency management coordination. State Courts Administrator PK Jameson has actively engaged in FCPIO's annual conferences both as faculty and as a participant. Some trial court administrators also have attended all or parts of conferences. Florida judges are invited as faculty for every conference and to participate while they are there.

Twitter:

Courts use Twitter for a variety of reasons. Posts can include high profile case notifications, opinion announcements, court holiday closures, emergency information, personal or court-related celebrations, law-related information, education and tours, and more. Some specialized uses of Twitter are notable. The Florida Supreme Court, for example, places the twice-yearly Florida Bar Exam results by anonymous applicant number on its website – and then notifies its nearly 12,000 Twitter subscribers via a tweet within minutes after scores are posted online. Candidates for admission to the Bar now routinely subscribe to the Court's Twitter account so they can receive the fastest notice of the final release.

Courts using Twitter:

- Eighteen (18) circuits
- All five DCAs
- Florida Supreme Court
- The OSCA

Facebook:

For several trial courts, Facebook posts often repeat Twitter posts, but not always. This can save staff time and broaden the reach of the message if posts are repeated on both platforms. Posts that include videos have a higher "reach" and more "views" than posts with pictures and text only. This is due in part to Facebook's algorithm – the computer program that determines the placement of items in a newsfeed. But it also is influenced by a strong consumer preference for visual material on social media. Courts are beginning to explore the use of videos, which also are favored by the algorithm and by viewer preference. There is widespread belief that videos will become increasingly important in the years ahead.

Courts on Facebook:

- Seven (7) circuits
- Two (2) DCAs
- Florida Supreme Court
- The OSCA

Facebook Live:

As part of implementing the Communication Plan, the Florida Supreme Court began using Facebook Live in January 2018 to broadcast court events. Other courts in Florida and elsewhere have used Facebook Live to stream one-time events like court ceremonies, such as judicial investitures or the opening of a new courthouse. But the Florida Supreme Court is the first court in the nation to use Facebook for live, unedited appellate oral argument broadcasts. This use was so novel that it received nationwide media attention when first announced. And it is being studied today by courts and IT professionals around the world. After six months of continuous use now, these Facebook Live broadcasts have shown themselves to be an overwhelmingly positive development that help promote public trust and confidence by improving transparency and openness.

Facebook Live, with access to the world's more than 2 billion Facebook users, may eventually eclipse the reach of other broadcast methods now being used, including cable television. Today, around seven-in-ten Americans use social media – with Facebook being the most popular. They use social media to connect with others, to engage with news content, and to share information, according to research by the Pew Research Center.⁴

People can watch the live video simply by visiting or following the Court's Facebook page – and can continue watching as they scroll through other newsfeed items. Users can subscribe to receive notifications when the Court begins a live broadcast. These Facebook Live broadcasts have a clear potential to greatly broaden public access to anyone who might want to see court arguments anywhere in the world.

Positive comments posted during Florida Supreme Court Facebook Live broadcasts include:

- “Thank you for doing this.”

⁴ [Social Media Fact Sheet](#), Pew Research Center, February 2018

- “I love being able to watch this.”
- “Watching from Costa Rica.”
- “Really enjoying this.”
- “Justice Barbara is correct.”
- “Awesome job!” and
- “I’m totally engrossed in the arguments.”

Universities in Mexico and Taiwan already have used the live Florida Supreme Court broadcasts in assignments given to technology students.

Courts and other governmental bodies throughout the nation have closely watched the Florida Supreme Court’s rollout of its Facebook Live broadcasts. The most commonly asked question is about comments that viewers can add at the bottom of the broadcast feed. Some judges and court personnel are concerned that these Facebook comments could become disorderly and detract from the dignity of the broadcast itself. However, staff has not found this to be the case. Most all comments are relevant and dignified. The few that are not can be handled by enforcement of the Court’s use policy that is attached to the Facebook page itself. Staff has worked closely with the General Counsel’s office in crafting a use policy that comports with state and federal law as well as the First Amendment.

Social Media Use in Emergencies

Florida’s state courts learned entirely new lessons about social media in September 2017. That was when Hurricane Irma hit Florida, ultimately closing 64 out of 67 county court systems and all of the appellate courts. One point is clear: Our expanding social media presence could not have been timelier. Social media played a crucial role in getting information out to the public and to the legal community during the hurricane – more so than was previously expected.

Storm-related information about the Florida State Courts was posted on social media between the time when the first mandatory evacuations were ordered in the hard-hit Florida Keys on September 6 and October 2 when full court operations were restored there. These posts achieved an astounding reach despite the crisis gripping the state. There were, for example, 256,938 “hits” or impressions on Twitter during that time on the 23 active state court Twitter accounts around Florida. These hits were attracted by a total of 201 posts placed on these court accounts during that same period.

Another storm-related event underscored the profound importance of social media today. At the height of the storm, the state courts system had to perform a controlled shutdown of its Tallahassee-based web servers due to unexpected problems with a central electrical generator. The Florida Supreme Court, the OSCA, and district and trial court websites that use these servers all went dark. During this roughly 36-hour period, social media became the exclusive means of communicating with employees, litigants, lawyers, journalists, and the public at large. Nonetheless, comprehensive statewide notices of court closures still went out over social media despite the loss of all other court web and email services. This real-world result confirmed the key role for social media that was envisioned by the 2016 Communication Plan when it was adopted by the Florida Supreme Court. In fact, courts would have been unable to communicate effectively without social media during Hurricane Irma's devastating strike.

The major role social media played in the crisis is underscored by the "viral" reach of Twitter and Facebook during the storm. The term "viral" means that communications over social media have a chain-reaction effect because each message is picked up by other social media users and shared or passed on to their friends and acquaintances. The total reach thereby grows in an exponential fashion. During Hurricane Irma, the viral spread of information first sent out on court social media posts was a major factor in their overwhelming success.

During Hurricane Irma, for example, social media notices of court closures were routinely picked up and then retransmitted by Bar organizations, local government emergency offices, journalists, and individual groups or citizens who felt the information was important. The reach of these posts thus grew dramatically, achieving far more saturation than is revealed by the court-based statistics cited here. It would have been impossible to achieve this same result by more traditional means. Moreover, many news organizations came to rely on court social media accounts for the definitive information that they published about court emergency operations during and after the storm.

The lesson shown by these results is clear. Court social media accounts now are an indispensable part of crisis communications, apart from their many other uses. For this reason alone, the 2016 Communication Plan was wise to encourage all state courts to deploy social media as a tool to meet their obligations to the people of Florida. Social media has become one of the top performing conduits of public information for courts facing a crisis.

Podcasts:

Three courts currently use podcasts to communicate with the public. [Open Ninth](#) from the Ninth Judicial Circuit posted their fiftieth podcast in June. [Community Connect](#) from the Eleventh Judicial Circuit has posted six podcasts. And [Beyond the Bench](#) from the Florida Supreme Court has posted five. According to the Pew Research Center⁵, the number of Americans listening to podcasts has increased substantially since 2006. In 2017, four-in-ten Americans ages 12 or older have listened to a podcast at some point. Podcasting provides a new and useful way for courts to discuss their roles and to let the public develop a better understanding of the judges who preside over state courts. As the Ninth Circuit's program demonstrates so clearly, podcasts can help humanize judges by letting the public hear them talk about their lives and experiences.

RECOGNIZING THE WORK OF FLORIDA PIOs

Many courts have improved or created effective initiatives and programs that advance goals in the communication plan. This year, several courts received recognition by the FCPIO for demonstrating an ongoing commitment to enhancing public trust and confidence in the judicial branch. The FCPIO Award for Excellence in Communications recognizes improvements or innovations that advance the goals of the Communication Plan and increase the public's understanding of Florida's court system and the judicial process. Award recipients demonstrate excellence, commitment, and dedication to the field of court communications.

The 2018 Award for Excellence in Communications recipients were:

- **Second Judicial Circuit Office of Court Administration:** Grant Slayden, Bill Wills, Issac Shuler, Paula Watkins, and Elizabeth Garber. The Second Circuit's Office of Court Administration demonstrated a commitment to improving court and media relations during recent high-profile murder trials. Staff executed a plan to address and avoid problems before they occurred.
- **Fifth Judicial Circuit Public Information Officer:** Jeff Fuller. Mr. Fuller provided outstanding public service during Hurricane Irma by successfully using social media and court websites to communicate to the public,

⁵ [Audio and Podcasting Fact Sheet](#), Pew Research Center, June 2017

attorneys, judges, and employees about court closures in a multi-county judicial circuit. Both the [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) accounts for this circuit court demonstrated the success of this effort.

- **Sixth Judicial Circuit Educational Tour Program:** Judges, Court Staff, State Attorney’s Office, Public Defender’s Office, and Sheriff’s Department. The Sixth Judicial Circuit’s tour program is a collaborative effort among judges and court staff together with the offices of the state attorney, public defender and sheriff to educate and engage students. This successful program is often featured on [Facebook](#).
- **Ninth Judicial Circuit Public Information Office:** Matt Benefiel, Julio Semino, Jeff Pierce, and Karen Levey. The Ninth Circuit debuted a three-part series in its [Open Ninth podcast](#) titled “The Shooter, The Victims, The Aftermath” about the 1984 courthouse shooting in Orlando. The podcast is an achievement of professional production, successful storytelling, and compassionate communications. It shows why the Ninth Circuit has become a national model for court use of podcasting.

Also recognized for court communication achievements was former Florida Chief Justice **Charles T. Wells** who received a Lifetime Achievement Award for creating the 2001-2002 court commission that first recommended the creation of FCPIO. Wells appointed this group – now usually called the Wells Commission – in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the anthrax attacks that soon thereafter shut down courts across Florida. His visionary work in this area was heavily influenced by his experiences successfully leading the Florida Supreme Court through the bramble of communications issues posed by *Bush v. Gore* in 2000.

PK Jameson and the Office of the State Courts Administrator – along with the Florida Commission on Access to Civil Justice and the Florida Bar Foundation – received a separate FCPIO communications award for creation of the Florida Courts Help App. This new smartphone application has made family law forms accessible to persons using their own personal communications devices. The App already is being recognized nationwide as an innovative way to harness smartphone technology to help court customers. It has demonstrated that the development of smartphone apps is a new and important tool for serving the public through cutting-edge communications technology.

Finally, **Ron Stuart** received an award for his outstanding public service and work above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a president of FCPIO from 2008 to 2010. Before his retirement, Stuart was the first full-time PIO in the Sixth Judicial Circuit. He established that office and quickly helped reverse a longstanding problem with court-related news stories published in local newspapers. He was the first elected president of FCPIO after it was initially organized as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation by the Florida Supreme Court Public Information Office following the 2002 recommendations of the Wells Commission.

CONCLUSION: DELIVERING OUR MESSAGE

As outlined in the [Year One Implementation Report](#), Florida's courts have taken the Communication Plan very seriously and have accomplished a great deal since it was first announced in December 2015. Each year court PIOs rely on their annual professional and educational conference to improve their skills and deepen their knowledge in communicating effectively. These annual conferences have become an important part of the annual Florida State Courts' meeting calendar, giving judges and court staff a chance to spend several days focusing on and learning about the rapidly changing techniques of Twenty-First Century communications.

The Year One Implementation Report ended with a simple message: Courts must look to 2017 and beyond to “expand” “improve” and “increase” their communications efforts. The FCPIO annual education conference agenda is attached as proof that this effort continues.

The members of FCPIO end this Year Two Implementation Report with another observation.

It is clear now that court communications is an emerging professional specialty in the larger realm of court management. Under its Communication Plan, Florida has become a national and international leader at the forefront of court communications. Later this year, several Florida court PIOs will be featured at the international Conference of Court Public Information Officers' meeting in Portland, Oregon. In fact, Florida has been asked to provide faculty to the most significant annual meetings of judges and court managers since its Communication Plan took effect in early 2016.

This professional recognition speaks volumes. Through the collegial efforts of FCPIO, Florida now is a leader in the emerging professional field of court communications.

Attachment A

FCPIO Member Questionnaire – 2018

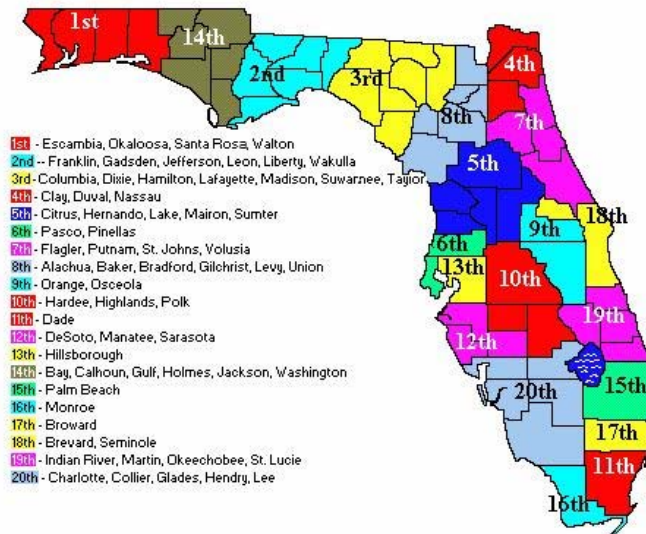
Please answer the questions below. If you feel a question doesn't apply to you, don't hesitate to answer N/A. But if you can add details as to why it doesn't, that would be helpful.

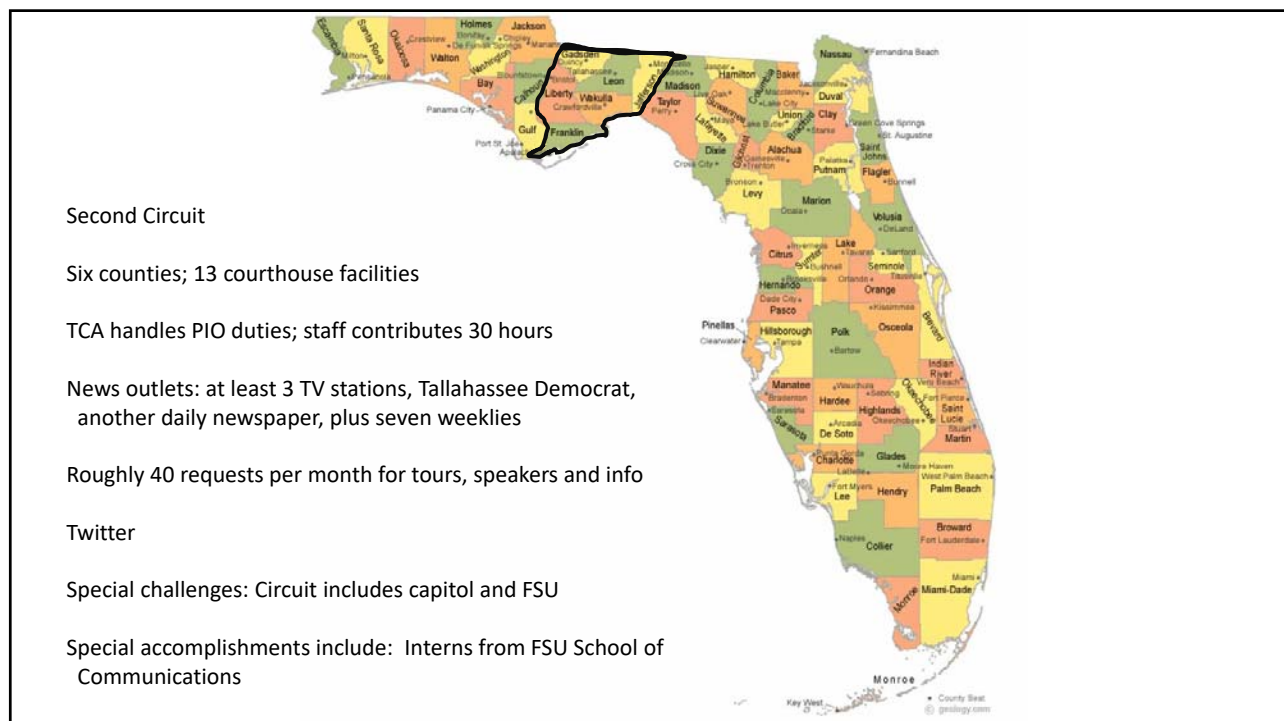
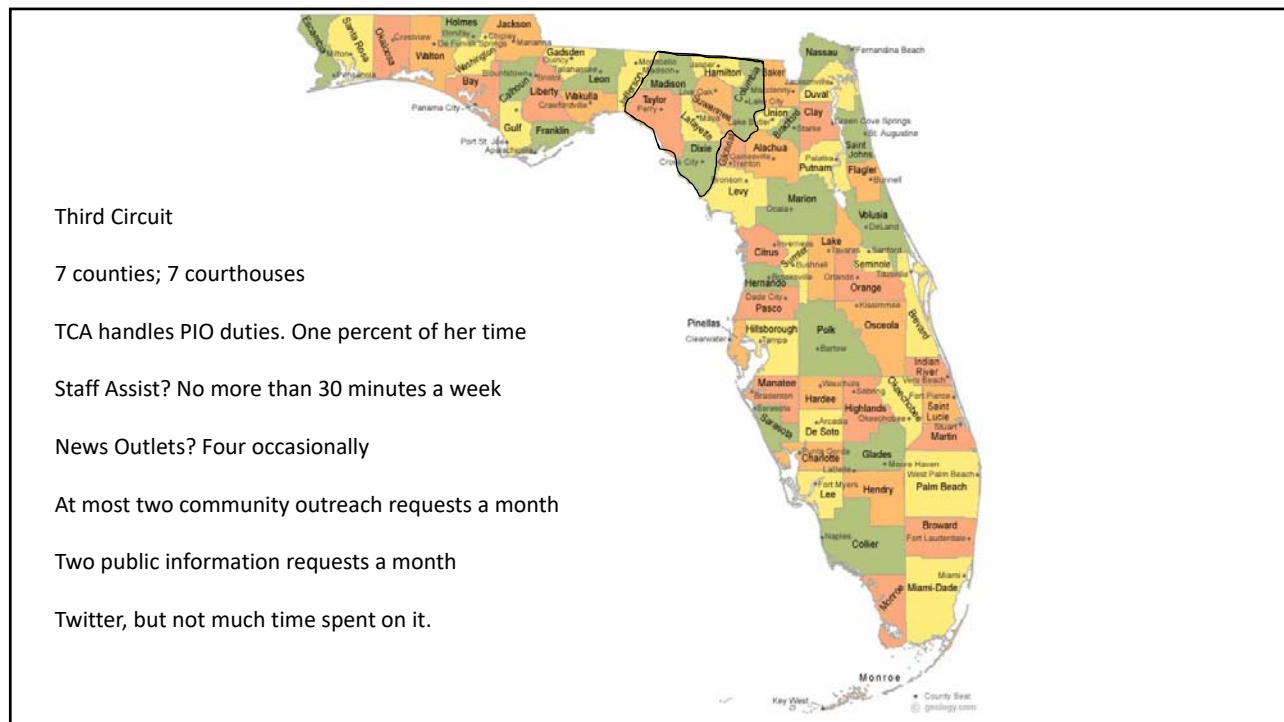
1. Your name, your title, number of counties in your circuit, number of courthouses in your circuit.
2. Brief description of your duties and the ballpark percentage of your work week on average that is taken up by P.I.O. duties (P.I.O. duties generally meaning responding to public records requests, working with the media, and community outreach such as tours)
3. Do you have staff to assist with P.I.O. duties? If so, how many hours of their work week are dedicated to P.I.O. duties?
- 4.. Number of news outlets you deal with on a regular basis.
5. Highest number of requests for community outreach (tours, speakers) you receive during any given month
6. Number of public information requests you receive on average per month.
7. Has your circuit begun using social media? If so, what percentage of your time spent on P.I.O. duties is dedicated to social media? If you have staff for P.I.O.-related duties, what percentage of their time is dedicated to social media? Which social media platforms do you use?
8. Does your circuit have a web site? If so, what percentage of your P.I.O. duties is dedicated to your writing for or maintaining your web site?
9. We are all governed by, among other authorities, Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.450. Does your circuit also have one or more administrative orders governing the media or that speak to the release of public records? (If so, please send copies of those AOs along with the responses to this questionnaire.)
10. To what extent, if at all, do you work with whatever law enforcement agency is responsible for courthouse security when it comes to arranging for the media to cover a proceeding?
11. To what extent, if at all, do you work with the clerk of court or clerks of court in your circuit when it comes to making public records available to the media?
12. If you have duties other than those of a P.I.O., could you please share any so-called short cuts you've devised – delegating a particular task to some other staff member, for instance – that typically would fall on the shoulders of the P.I.O.?
13. If there is an aspect of your P.I.O. duties not captured in the above questions, please detail.

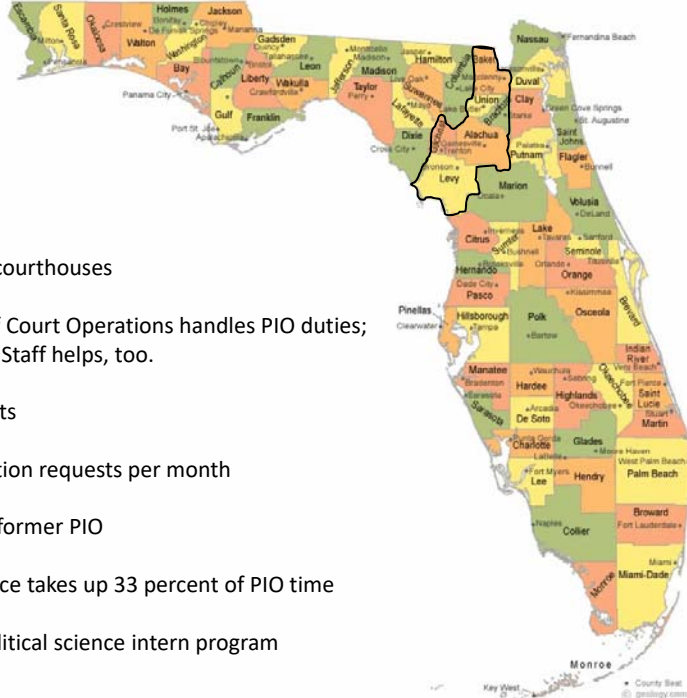
Attachment B

PIO Tool Kit Survey Results

Judicial Circuits







Eighth Circuit

Six counties; seven courthouses

Assistant Director of Court Operations handles PIO duties; four hours a week. Staff helps, too.

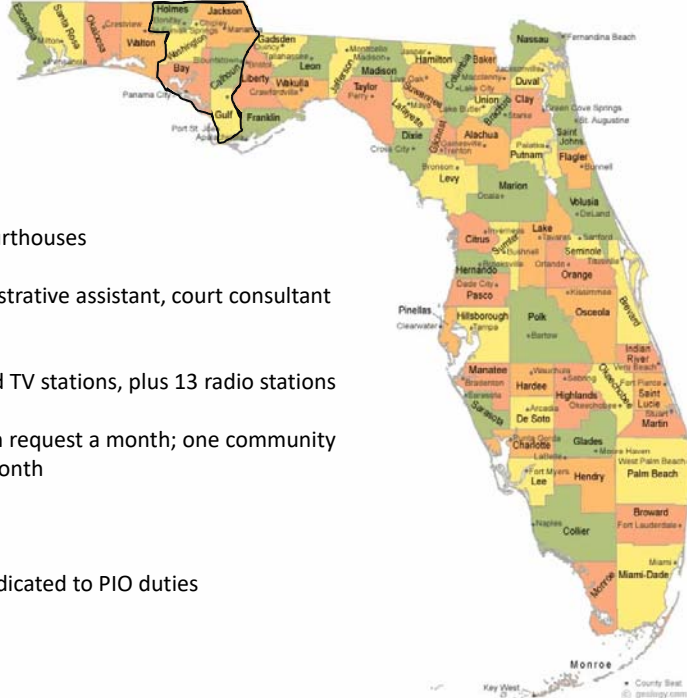
Five to six news outlets

Four public information requests per month

Twitter, handled by former PIO

Web site maintenance takes up 33 percent of PIO time

Special program: Political science intern program



Fourteenth Circuit

Six counties; seven courthouses

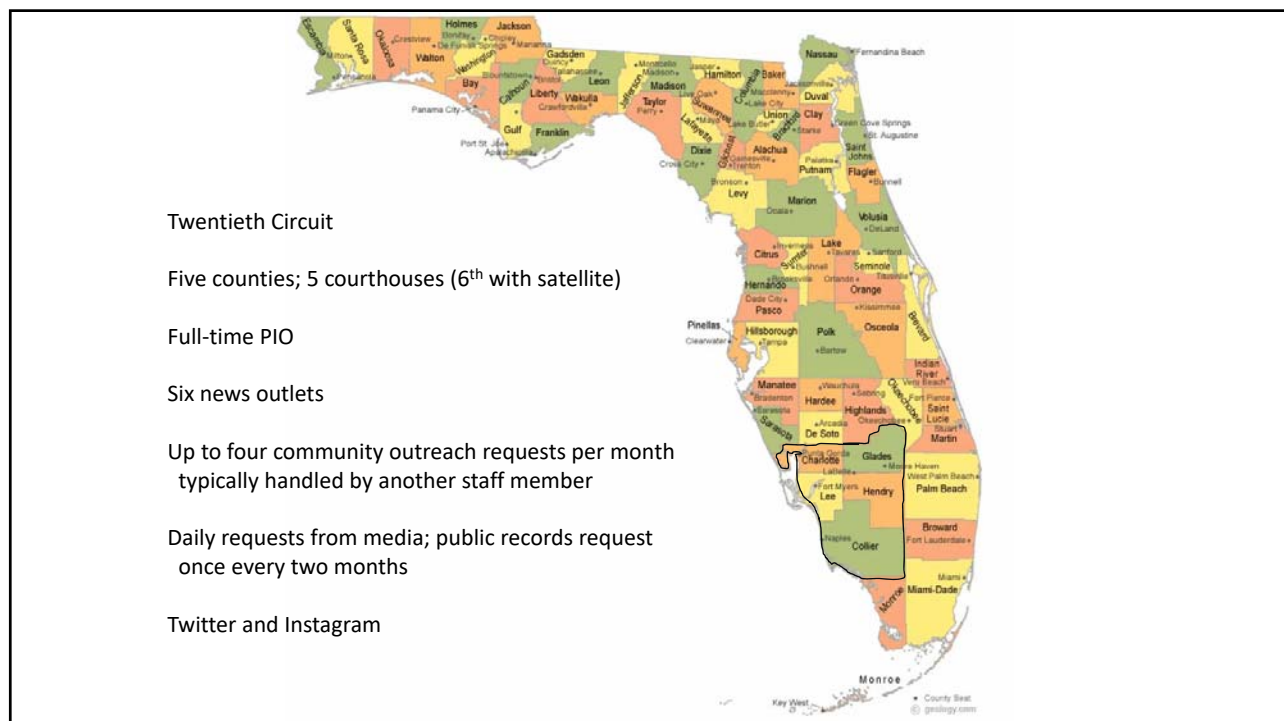
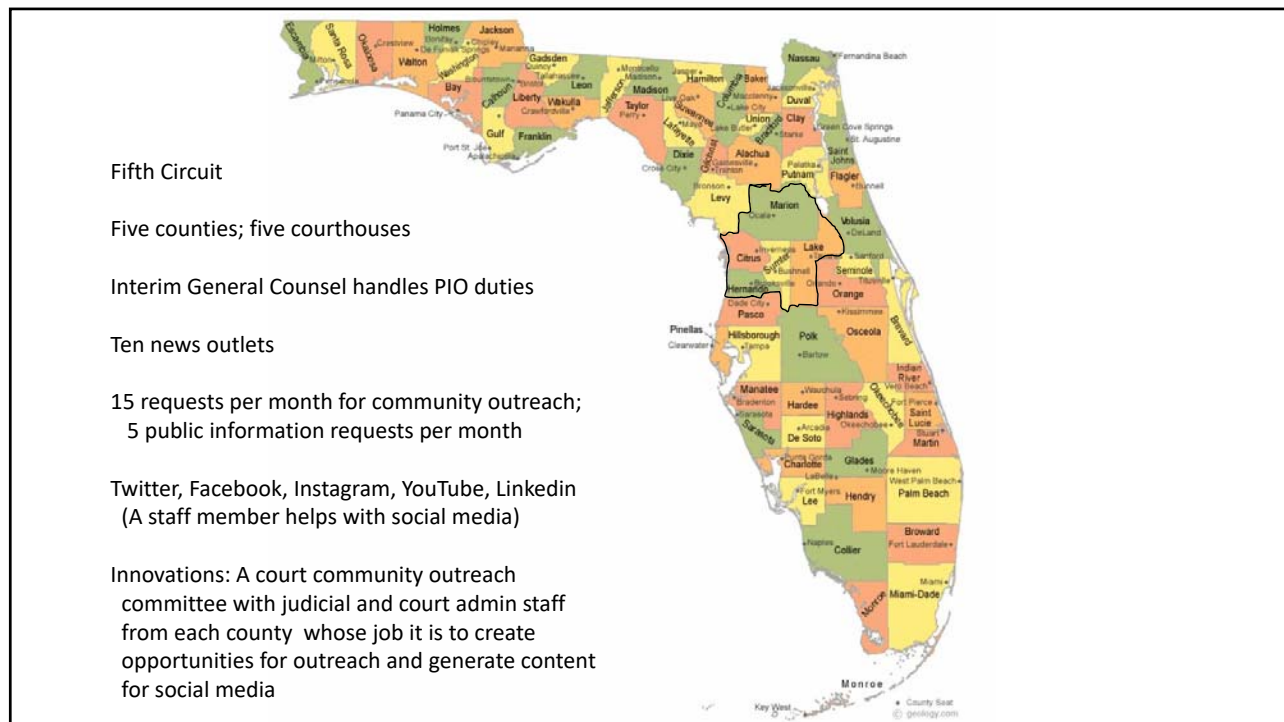
TCA, ADR, CTO, administrative assistant, court consultant handle PIO duties

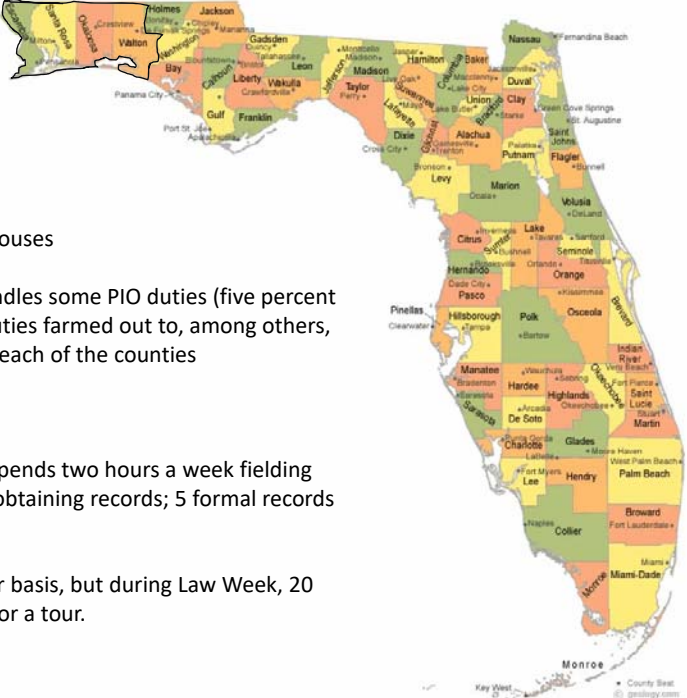
Sixteen newspaper and TV stations, plus 13 radio stations

One public information request a month; one community outreach request a month

Twitter

Not a single person dedicated to PIO duties





First Circuit

Four counties; six courthouses


Senior Staff Attorney handles some PIO duties (five percent or less of time) Other duties farmed out to, among others, operations managers in each of the counties

Four main news outlets

Court admin employee spends two hours a week fielding calls about process for obtaining records; 5 formal records requests per year.

Very few tours on regular basis, but during Law Week, 20 students groups come for a tour.

Twitter, infrequently



Seventh Circuit

Four counties; six courthouses

Full-time PIO (also manages web site)

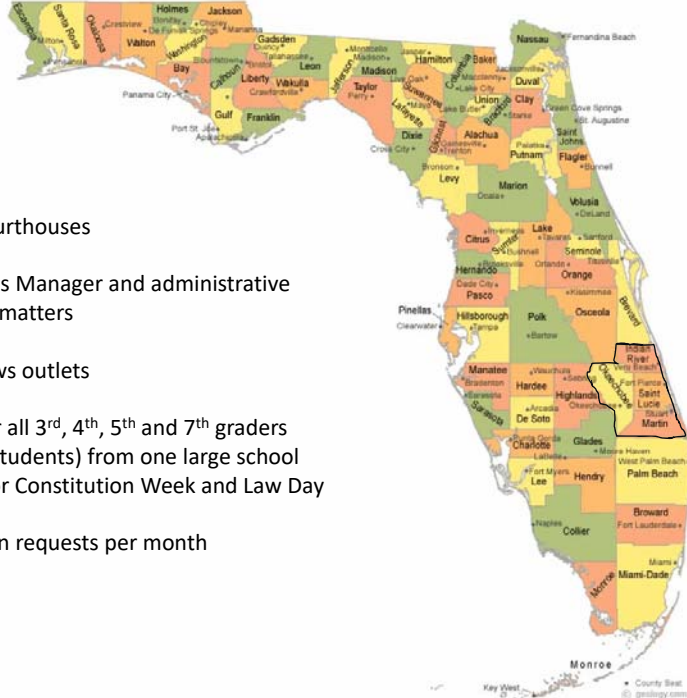
Eight to ten media outlets

At busiest, 50 community outreach requests (A local professor assigns his students to attend a court hearing)

Phone inquiries daily; a request for documents once or twice a month

Twitter

Observation: Day-to-day activities are such that little time is left for projects



Nineteenth Circuit

Four counties; five courthouses

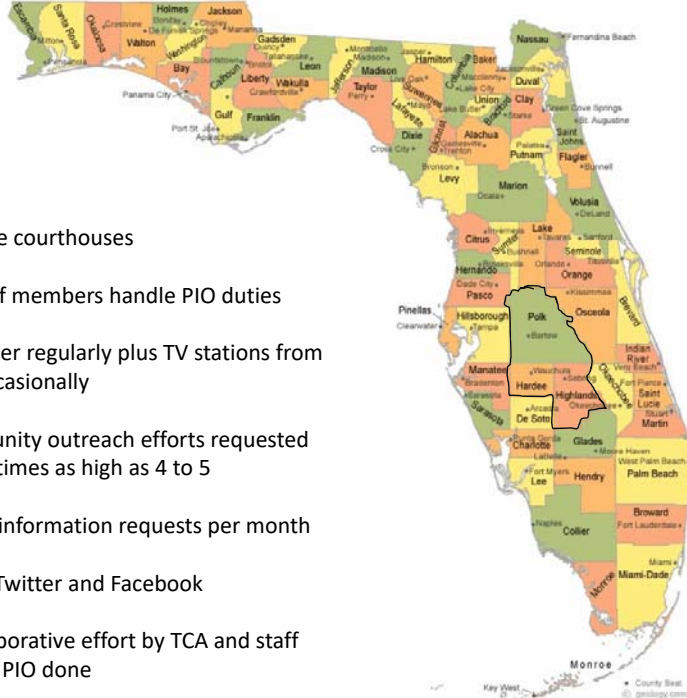
TCA, Human Resources Manager and administrative assistant handle PIO matters

Two to three local news outlets

A course on justice for all 3rd, 4th, 5th and 7th graders (approximately 900 students) from one large school in St. Lucie County for Constitution Week and Law Day

Five public information requests per month

Facebook and Twitter



Tenth Circuit

Three counties; five courthouses

TCA plus three staff members handle PIO duties

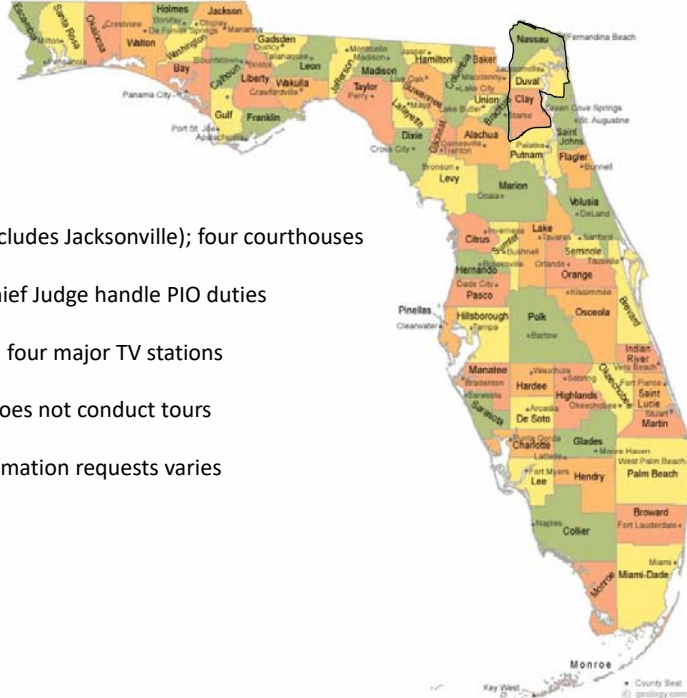
One local newspaper regularly plus TV stations from Tampa market occasionally

One to two community outreach efforts requested per month, sometimes as high as 4 to 5

Four to five public information requests per month

Plans in works for Twitter and Facebook

Observation: Collaborative effort by TCA and staff get the job of the PIO done



Fourth Circuit

Three counties (one includes Jacksonville); four courthouses

TCA, Court Counsel, Chief Judge handle PIO duties

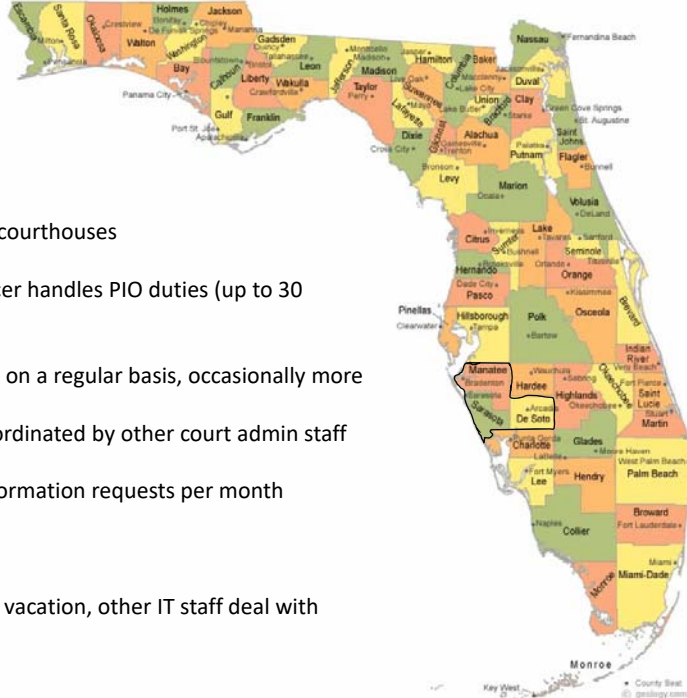
One major newspaper; four major TV stations

Court administration does not conduct tours

Number of public information requests varies

No social media

No PIO



Twelfth Circuit

Three counties; seven courthouses

Chief Information Officer handles PIO duties (up to 30 percent of his time).

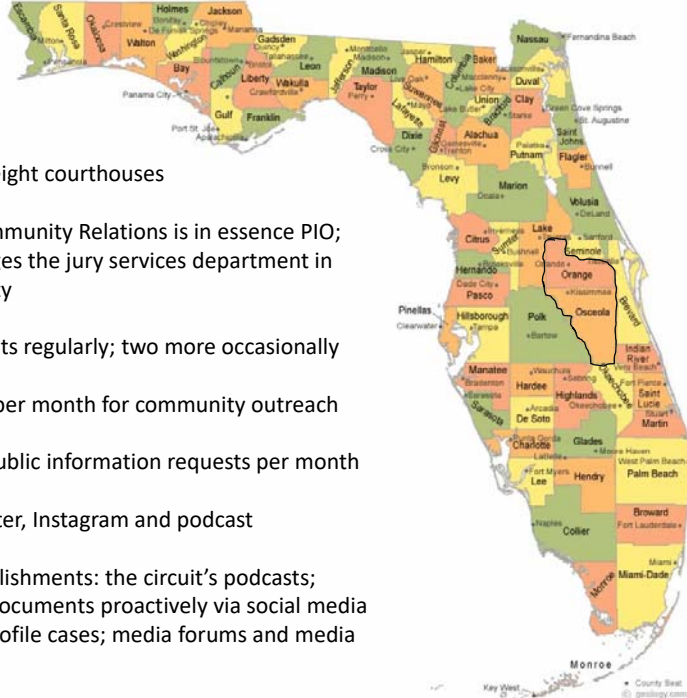
Up to ten news outlets on a regular basis, occasionally more

Tours and speakers coordinated by other court admin staff

Seven to ten public information requests per month

Twitter, Instagram

Observation: When on vacation, other IT staff deal with media



Ninth Circuit

Two counties; eight courthouses

Director of Community Relations is in essence PIO; he also manages the jury services department in Osceola County


Five news outlets regularly; two more occasionally

Eight requests per month for community outreach

Five to seven public information requests per month

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and podcast

Special accomplishments: the circuit's podcasts; its providing documents proactively via social media during high-profile cases; media forums and media brochure



Eighteenth Circuit

Two counties; six courthouses

Administrative services manager is PIO (PIO duties take up more than 50 percent of her time)

Seven news outlets

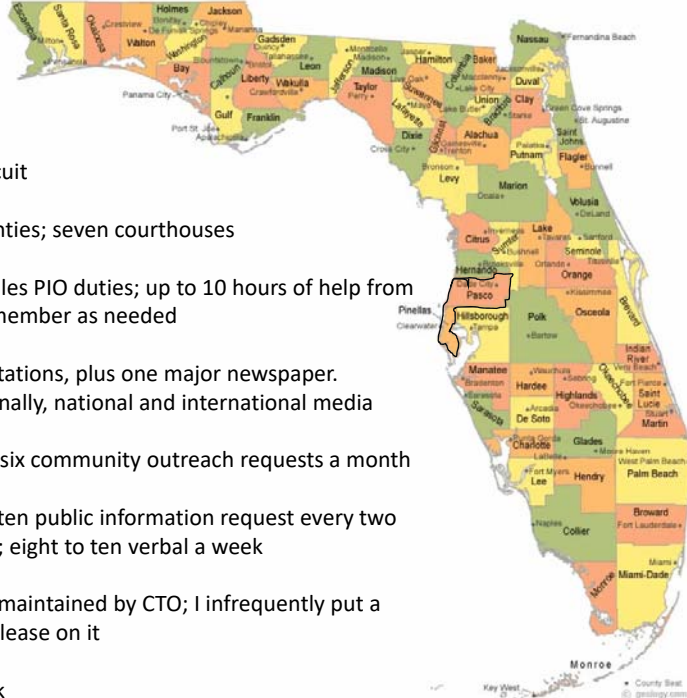
Ten community outreach requests per month

Two public information requests per month

Facebook, Twitter

Challenge: Working with citizen or website journalists who do not have the same standards as traditional media

Innovation: Asking staff members at other courthouses to take photographs.



Sixth Circuit

Two counties; seven courthouses

PIO handles PIO duties; up to 10 hours of help from a staff member as needed

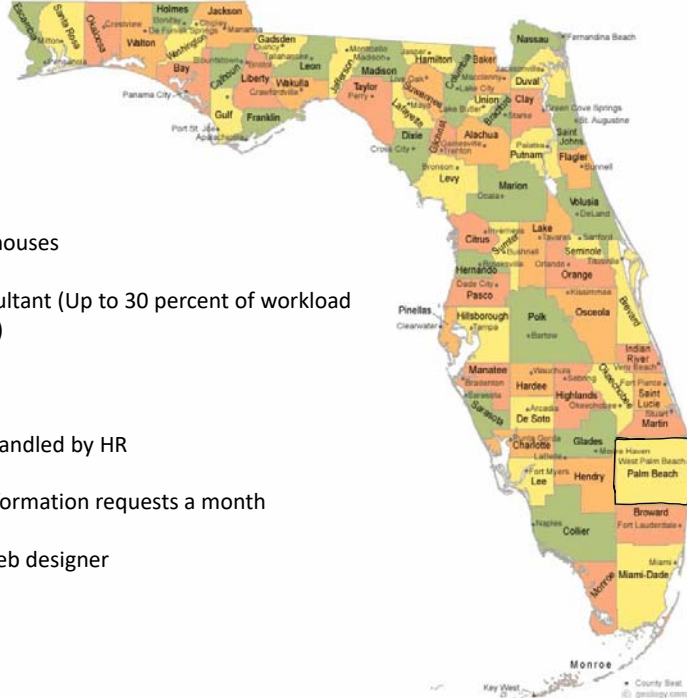
Five TV stations, plus one major newspaper.
Occasionally, national and international media

Three to six community outreach requests a month

One written public information request every two months; eight to ten verbal a week

Website maintained by CTO; I infrequently put a press release on it

Facebook



Fifteenth Circuit

One county; five courthouses

Court Operations Consultant (Up to 30 percent of workload devoted to PIO duties)

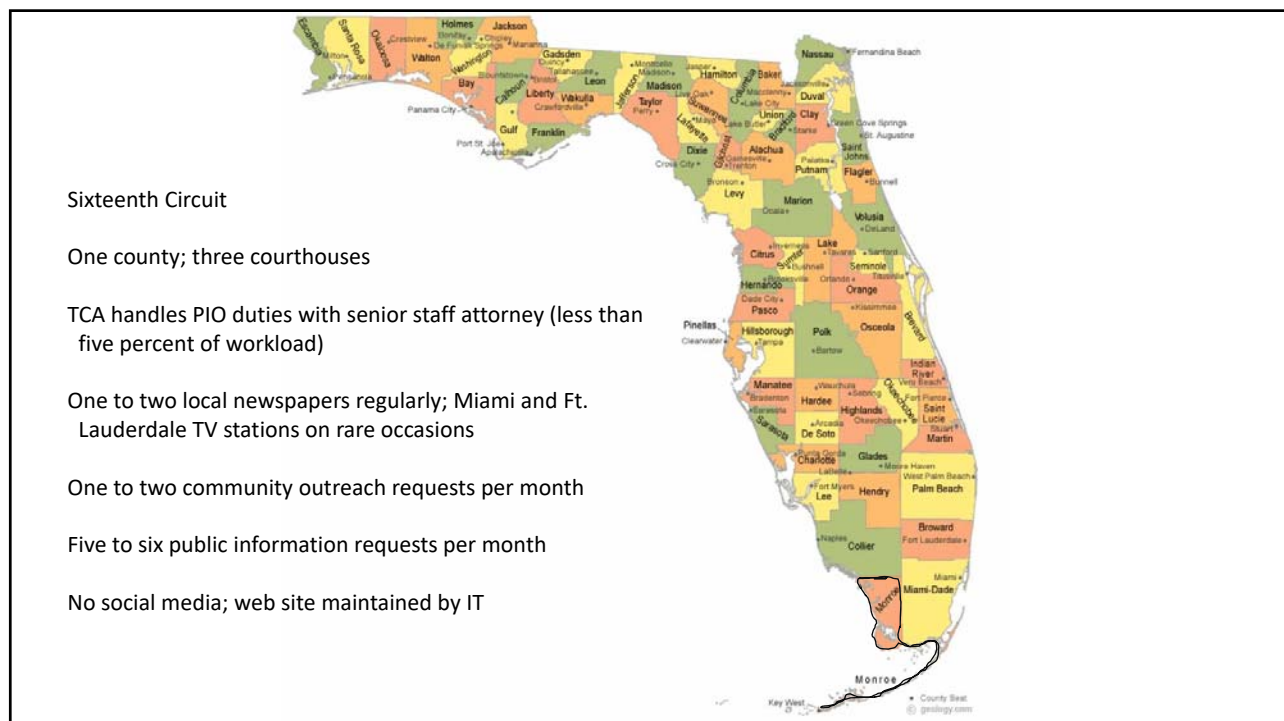
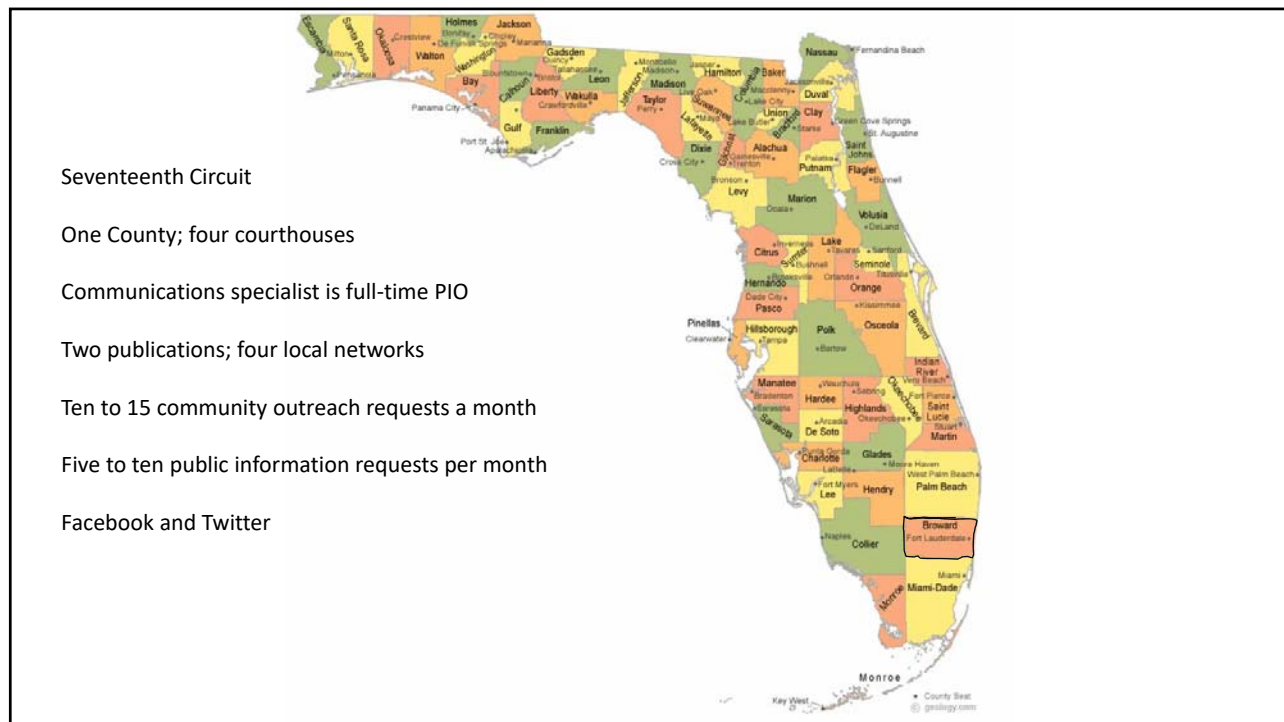
Six news outlets

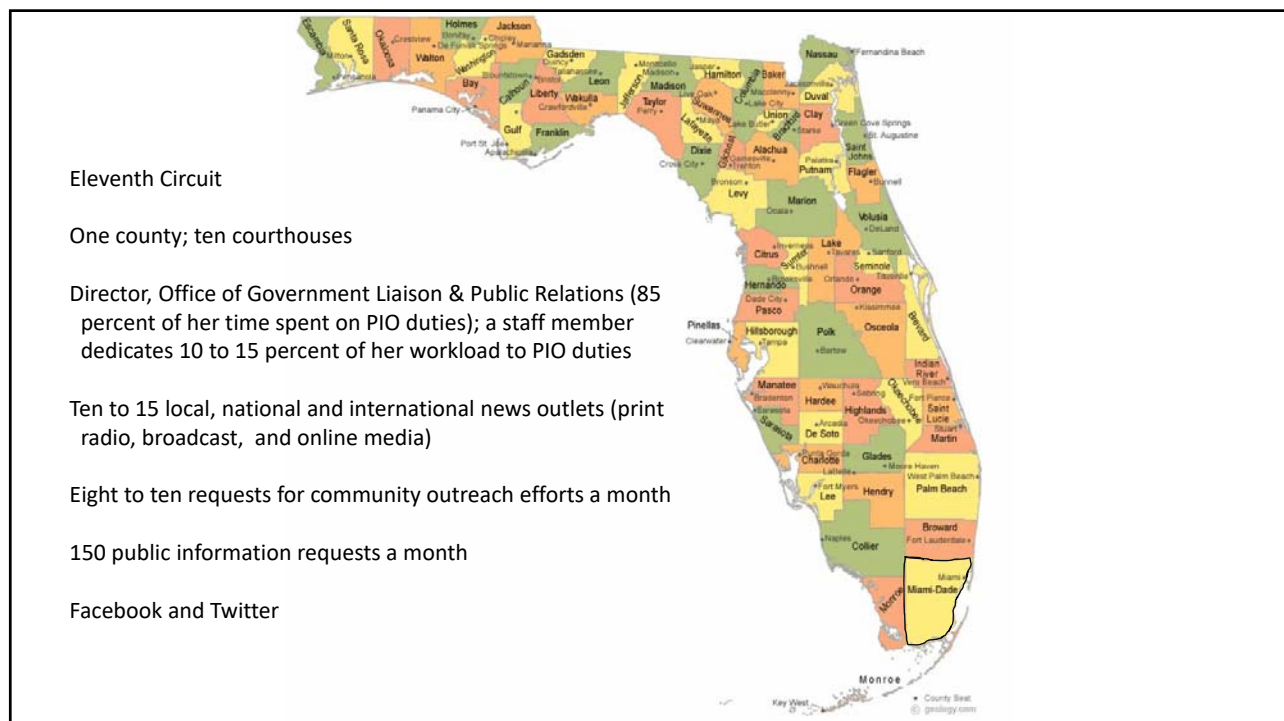
Community outreach handled by HR

Ten to twelve public information requests a month

Web site handled by web designer

Twitter handled by TCA





Twitter

Circuits provide links to Twitter on web sites



And often a tweet provides a link back to the web site if a lengthy document is involved



Twitter

Single Photo included in Tweet



Twitter

Multiple photos with Tweet, much like Facebook



Twitter

Court Closures – Holidays or Storms or Emergencies

Training Sessions (I.E. Court Counsel lawyers teaching case managers how to write legal documents).

Special programs benefiting the public (Driver's license clinic)

Special courts (Veterans Court, Teen Court)

Judges speaking, receiving awards

Visitors, Tours

Twitter

Reminders – Deadlines for Applications (i.e. court-appointed counsel registry)

Reminders – That The Courts have longstanding programs or facilities for the public's benefit, such as Law Libraries and Self-Help Centers

Tie-Ins – Using a national celebration to feature a judge (i.e. Using National Women's month to recognize a circuit's first woman African-American judge).

Twitter

Career opportunities

Just telling people it's a nice day

Definitions – What is a court reporter, how does security work, why do we need interpreters

Introducing new courts, introducing new judges

Events – Adoption Day, Reunification Day, Drug Court Graduation, Blood Drives

Twitter

Case-related information for the media:

- Interesting cases coming up

- Updates on cases of interest as they wind through the system

- Court Closures Part II – Announcement of closures plus link to rescheduling on the web site

- Anything with dogs – Students hanging out with therapy dogs

Twitter

- Tie-Ins Part II – Using an anniversary to feature an aspect of the judicial system (i.e. Using the anniversary of a judge's death to highlight a courthouse named after him)

- Announcing meetings of interest – like when the Parent Advocacy Connection, who support parents in the foster system, get together

- Announce that a podcast is available, provide link

Twitter

What judges do off the bench

Coach their children's sports teams

Do something athletic themselves (5-Ks, Triathlons)

Celebrate their birthdays

Travel abroad

Facebook

Repeat what was tweeted

Provide link to a podcast

Take a photo of a journalist talking to a judge, and, when the article appears, post the photo with a link to the article

Post TV segments featuring judges (with a program such as SnapStream)

Twitter vs. Facebook

Sixteen Circuits are on Twitter


Seven Circuits are on Facebook

Six Circuits are on both

Composing A Tweet (In 280 Characters)



Composing A Facebook Post

 **Sixth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida** · March 21 at 2:37pm · 🌐

Pinellas-Pasco Circuit Judge Shawn Crane spoke to Tampa Bay Times reporter TyLisa C. Johnson on Monday, March 5, 2018, about Adult Drug Court, over which Judge Crane presides. Shari Albright, who successfully completed drug court, also made herself available for the story. She is seated next to the reporter. To read the story, which went online today, March 21, [click here](#).
<http://www.tampabay.com/.../Pasco-drug-court-offers-treatment...>
It will appear in print in the Pasco Times on Friday, March 23.




👤 939 people reached Boost Post

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share ⚙️

👤 Chris Limberopoulos, Doug Baird and 38 others

10 Shares

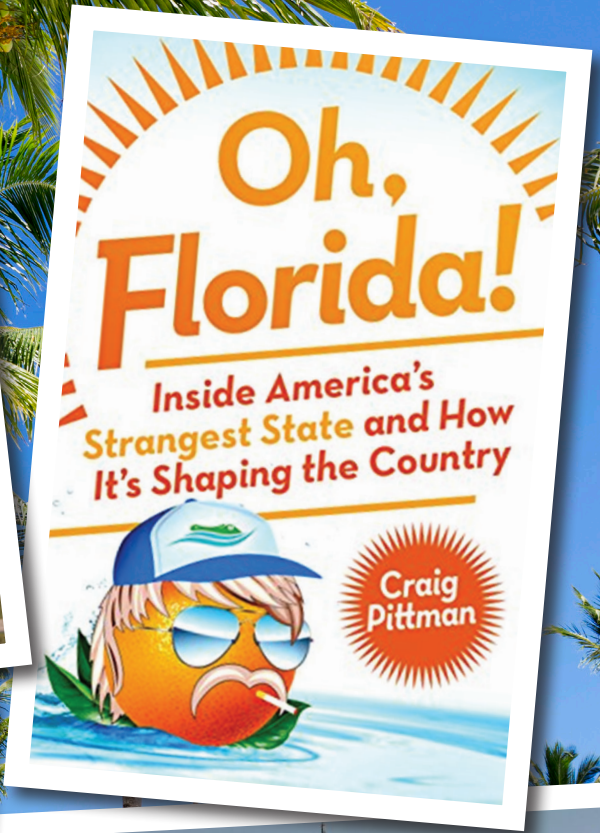
 Write a comment... 😊 📷 📧 🗨️



Florida Court Public Information Officers, Inc.

2018 Professional Education Conference

**April 11-13, 2018
St. Petersburg, Florida**





Florida Court PIO Conference Agenda
April 11-13, 2018
St. Petersburg, Florida

Wednesday, April 11

8 to 8:30 a.m.	Registration
8:30 to 8:45 a.m.	Welcome and Introductions Sixth Judicial Circuit Chief Judge Anthony Rondolino
8:45 to 9:30 a.m.	Getting to Know You, Getting to Know All About You Getting to Like You, Getting to Hope You Like Me Karen Levey & Julio Semino, Ninth Judicial Circuit
9:30 to 11 a.m.	Winning A Judicial Election but Losing the Job Eighteenth Judicial Circuit Judge Lisa Davidson
11 to 11:15 a.m.	Intermission (Introduce yourself to someone you have never met.)
11:15 to 11:30 a.m.	Lifetime Achievement Award Former Justice Charles T. Wells
11:30 to Noon	Committee Reports: It's more exciting than it sounds Tricia Know, Office of the State Courts Administrator Julio Semino, Ninth Judicial Circuit
12 to 1:15 p.m.	Lunch
1:15 to 3:15 p.m.	Lights, Camera, Action! What's in your toolkit? Court PIO essentials Sara Miles, Stephen Thompson, Tricia Knox
3:15 to 3:30 p.m.	Recess (Make social media friends.)
3:30 to 4:30 p.m.	"Oh, Florida!" The man, the myth, the meme Author Craig Pittman
4:30 to 5 p.m.	Book signing event Buy an autograph, get a copy of "Oh, Florida!" free
5 p.m.	It's always 5 o'clock somewhere Social Hour - Red Mesa Cantina "Lucha Bar"

continued

Thursday, April 12

8:30 to 10 a.m.	Dealing with the Media During a High Casualty Event: Lessons Learned from the Sandy Hook Massacre Lt. Paul Vance, Connecticut State Police, retired
10 to 10:15 a.m.	Interlude (Tell someone the story of your middle name.)
10:15 to 11:45 a.m.	Court Safety and Active Shooter Training Silvester Dawson, Marshal, Florida Supreme Court
11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.	Lunch
1 to 2 p.m.	Irma and Us: Emergency Operations Review and Discussion Steven Hall, Chief of General Services for the OSCA Jeff Fuller, Interim General Counsel, Fifth Judicial Circuit
2 to 2:15 p.m.	Pause (Text the person you care about most in the world. Use emojis.)
2:15 to 3:15 p.m.	Any Tweet in a Storm, Emergency Communications in Florida Thomas Iovino, Communications Director, Florida Department of Health in Manatee County
3:30 to 4:30 p.m.	Protect Florida Democracy: Our Constitution, Our Rights, Our Courts Michael Higer, President, The Florida Bar Sandra Diamond, Florida Bar Board of Governors Sixth Circuit Representative, and Chair, CRC Committee
Evening	Group trip to The Salvador Dali Museum

Friday, April 13

8:30 to 9:15 a.m.	Florida Courts Help, From Brainstorm to App Store PK Jameson, State Courts Administrator
9:15 to 9:30 a.m.	Hiatus (Send yourself a calendar alert to call a fellow FCPIO member on June 14 and wish them a happy Flag Day.)
9:30 to 11 a.m.	FCPIO Member Showcase Sharing outstanding work from around the state.
11:15 to 11:30 a.m.	FCPIO Awards presentations
11:30 to noon	Justice Charles T. Canady
Noon	Closing Remarks

2018 Florida Court Public Information Officers Conference Participants



Veronica Antonoff,
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Court of Appeal,
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Paul Flemming, Public
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of the State Courts
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Stacey Hoskins, Chief Deputy Court Administrator, 10th Judicial Circuit, shoskins@jud10.flcourts.org



Elizabeth Garber, Budget Services Manager, Second Judicial Circuit, GarberE@leoncountyfl.gov



Gay Inskeep, Trial Court Administrator, Sixth Judicial Circuit, Ginskeep@jud6.org



Steven Hall, Chief of General Services, Office of the State Courts Administrator, halls@flcourts.org



PK Jameson, State Courts Administrator, Office of the State Courts Administrator, jamesonp@flcourts.org



Marynelle Hardee, Public Information Officer, Eighth Judicial Circuit, hardeem@circuit8.org



Eve Janocko, Chief Deputy Court Administrator, Fourth Judicial Circuit, Ejanocko@coj.net



Jo Haynes, Marshal, Second District Court of Appeal, haynesj@flcourts.org

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Tricia Knox, Deputy Director of Public Information, Florida Supreme Court,
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Dennis Menendez, Chief Information Officer, 12th Judicial Circuit,
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Ludmilla Leis, Court Communications Officer, Seventh Judicial Circuit,
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Sara Miles, Public Information Officer, 20th Judicial Circuit,
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continued



Debra Oats, Public Information Officer, 15th Judicial Circuit, Doats@pbcgov.org



Eunice Sigler, Director Office of Government Liaison and Public Relations, 11th Judicial Circuit, Esigler@jud11.flcourts.org



Emilie Rietow, Education & Information Administrator, Florida Supreme Court, rietowe@flcourts.org



Tracy Skeen, Senior Court Operations Consultant, 10th Judicial Circuit, tskeen@jud10.flcourts.org



Brandon Roberts, Access Control System Specialist, Fifth Judicial Circuit, Broberts@circuit5.org



Nick Sudzina, Trial Court Administrator, 10th Judicial Circuit, nsudzina@jud10.flcourts.org



Julio Semino, Court Support Manager, Ninth Judicial Circuit, ctadjs1@ocnjcc.org



Kevin Taylor, Marshal, First District Court of Appeal, taylorlk@1dca.org

Isaac Shuler, Court Technology Officer, Second Judicial Circuit, shuleri@leoncountyfl.gov



Stephen Thompson, Communications Coordinator, Sixth Judicial Circuit, sthompson@jud6.org

continued



Todd Tuzzolino, Chief Deputy Court Administrator, Fifth Judicial Circuit, ttuzzolino@circuit5.org



Kasey Watson, Senior Staff Attorney, Supervisor Clerk, First Judicial Circuit, kasey.watson@flcourts1.gov



Francine Walker, Director of Public Information and Bar Services, The Florida Bar, fwalker@flabar.org



Robin Wright, Trial Court Administrator, First Judicial Circuit, robin.wright@flcourts1.gov



Craig Waters, Director of Public Information, Florida Supreme Court, watersc@flcourts.org

2018 Florida Court Public Information Officers Conference Presenters



THE HONORABLE ANTHONY RONDOLINO **Chief Judge Sixth Judicial Circuit**

Judge Rondolino is serving his second term as chief judge of the Sixth Judicial Circuit. He is constitutionally responsible for the administrative supervision of the courts and court staff within the sixth circuit, which serves almost 1.5 million residents in Pinellas and Pasco counties. Forty-five circuit judges and 24 county judges preside over court proceedings in seven locations and are supported by an administrative staff of approximately 250.

Judge Rondolino has served as a circuit judge longer than any other in the sixth circuit, except for one, and he has played a role in roughly 300 jury trials, either during his 15 years as a lawyer or during his 28 years on the bench. While a judge, he has presided over a wide range of civil cases, including accident claims, medical malpractice actions and three lengthy tobacco litigation trials.

Judge Rondolino has also served as the administrative judge for the circuit's civil division, and for the circuit's criminal and family divisions as well. Three times the Florida Supreme Court appointed him an associate judge to serve on the Second District Court of Appeal.

A native of Lexington, Kentucky, Judge Rondolino graduated with honors from the Florida State University School of Law in 1974, and shortly thereafter joined the local public defender's office, rising to the position of chief assistant public defender.

He has taught courses as an adjunct professor at Stetson Law School, and has served on several boards and committees, including the Child Support Enforcement Coordinating Council, of which he was the chairman, and the Pinellas County Domestic Violence Task Force.

His awards include the St. Petersburg Bar Association's Judicial Appreciation Award, the William Castagna Award for Judicial Excellence, and in 1988 he was named Outstanding Assistant Public Defender in Florida.



THE HONORABLE LISA DAVIDSON **Circuit Judge 18th Judicial Circuit**

Judge Lisa Davidson became a county judge in Brevard County in 1994, rising to the circuit bench in the 18th Judicial Circuit in 1998. She worked as an assistant public defender and assistant state attorney in Broward County and in private practice in Brevard County.

Among the areas Judge Davidson has served on the bench are Dependency; Criminal; Civil & Family; Delinquency; Guardianship; Probate and Foreclosure Divisions. She has also served in multiple judicial administrative positions, including as administrative judge for the Foreclosure Case Management Committee, Juvenile Drug Court, Civil Division, Juvenile Division, and Family Division.

She has served on the Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee as a member from 1995-2017 and as chair for two terms. She was director of Florida's Judicial Mentor Program 1999-2008 and has served on multiple Florida Supreme Court committees and commissions, including on the Florida Courts Technology Commission and the Select Committee on Justice Teaching Initiative.

Judge Davidson, who earned her bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan and her law degree from Duke Law School, has been recognized with numerous awards, including the Outstanding Jurist

continued

Award in the Eighteenth Judicial Circuit from the Brevard County Bar Association in four separate years, the William E. Gladstone Award for judicial leadership and service to the state's children, as well as recognition from the Florida Supreme Court and Governor for Dedication to the Florida Guardian Ad Litem Program in 1993 and 2003.



THE HONORABLE CHARLES T. WELLS

Former Justice Florida Supreme Court

Charles T. Wells was the 75th Justice appointed to the Florida Supreme Court, serving from 1994 until 2009. He headed the state courts system as Chief Justice from July 1, 2000, through June 30, 2002. During that period he presided over the most high-profile cases ever brought to the Florida Supreme Court, the various disputes known to history as Bush v. Gore after Florida's contested 2000 presidential election challenges and recounts.

The following year, he confronted the disruption brought by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the anthrax scares that followed. After handling these major crises, Wells appointed a statewide workgroup to make recommendations for improvements to the state courts system's emergency planning preparedness. One of those recommendation was the creation of a network of court communicators that later became Florida Court Public Information Officers.



JULIO SEMINO

Court Support Manager Ninth Judicial Circuit

Employed with the Florida Court System since 2005, Julio has served as the Court Support Manager for the 9th Judicial Circuit during the past 8 years and has supervised the Osceola County Jury Services Department for the last several years. The Court Support Department is responsible for providing audio- visual support to judges and staff during Court programs and services, designing and publishing the Circuit's publications, organizing community outreach programs, and spearheading the Circuit's social media efforts, including its presence on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Vimeo, and ***Open Ninth***, the Court's official podcast. Julio has provided numerous presentations on topics ranging from high-profile cases to court interpreting ethics.



CRAIG PITTMAN

Author

Craig Pittman, author of the award-winning non-fiction book *Oh, Florida How America's Weirdest State Influences the Rest of the Country*, is a native Floridian. Born in Pensacola, he graduated from Troy State University in Alabama, where his muckraking work for the student paper prompted an agitated dean to label him the most destructive force on campus.

He has covered a variety of beats and natural disasters, including hurricanes, wildfires and the Florida Legislature. Since 1998 he has reported on environmental issues with award-winning coverage for Florida's largest newspaper, the Tampa Bay Times. A series he co-wrote with Matthew Waite became their book, *Paving Paradise: Florida's Vanishing Wetlands and the Failure of No Net Loss* (2009).

continued

Since then Pittman has written *Manatee Insanity: Inside the War Over Florida's Most Famous Endangered Species* (2010), which the Florida Humanities Council declared an essential read for all Floridians, and *The Scent of Scandal: Greed, Betrayal, and the World's Most Beautiful Orchids*, which the Atlanta Journal-Constitution declared irresistible. His latest book, *Oh, Florida* won the gold medal for Florida non-fiction from the Florida Book Awards. The New York Times called it compulsively readable.

Pittman lives in St. Petersburg with his wife and children.



PAUL VANCE

Retired Connecticut State Police Lieutenant

Lt. J. Paul Vance was the chief spokesperson for 16 years for the Connecticut State Police. He has been a Connecticut state trooper for more than 43 years.

During his state police career, Lt. Vance has been assigned to patrol at both Troop L in Litchfield and Troop I in Bethany. He was assigned as a specialty K-9 Handler, a SWAT team member, a helicopter medic, and to other various specialized assignments.

Lt. Vance has served as a state police major crime squad detective and as the resident state trooper in charge of all police service in the Town of Prospect. Lt. Vance was an academy instructor at the Connecticut State Police Training Academy. He taught state police recruits and local police officers, and also conducted in-service training classes for all Connecticut state troopers. Lt Vance has served in several other specialized units of the Connecticut State Police.

As commanding officer of the Public Information Office, Lt. Vance was the public voice and face of the Connecticut State Police during the mass shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012.

Lt Vance was assigned as the special operations commander and Connecticut's traffic services commander prior to his retirement April 1, 2017.



SILVESTER DAWSON

Florida Supreme Court Marshal

Marshal Dawson is a native of Tallahassee. After completing a tour of duty in the U.S. Army, he joined the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) in 1983. His first assignment was Jacksonville.

Marshal Dawson spent 28 years with the Florida Highway Patrol. During his FHP career, he served as the FHP Training Academy Director, Chief of the Bureau of Investigations and Internal Affairs, and FHP Deputy Director/Chief of Staff where he managed a \$220 million budget. In 1998, he became the first African-American troop commander with the Florida Highway Patrol.

On June 1, 2011, Marshal Dawson became the eighth marshal of the Supreme Court of Florida.

As marshal, his duties include managing the Supreme Court's budget, facilities, and law enforcement division that provides threat investigations, security, and dignitary protection for the justices, employees, and properties of the Supreme Court of Florida.

His articles on leadership have been published in popular law enforcement magazines. He currently serves as president of the State Law Enforcement Chiefs Association. Marshal Dawson is a graduate of the 194th Session of the FBI National Academy and holds a bachelor's degree in organizational management from Warner Southern College and a master's degree in criminal justice administration from St. Leo University.

continued



STEVEN HALL

OSCA Chief of General Services

Hall has served nearly 14 years with the Office of the State Courts Administrator. In his current role, Steven serves as the chief of General Services and is responsible for overseeing purchasing and procurement policies, contract and grant management, records management, appellate court facility projects, space planning, risk management, workplace safety, court security initiatives and emergency preparedness coordination for the judicial branch.

He has provided consultation, instruction and support on a variety of topics, including organizational and statewide policies and procedures, relevant laws and regulations, training programs, and organizational development within the Florida State Courts System. Prior to the OSCA, he worked at The Florida Bar

primarily in the lawyer regulation division on practice and professionalism enhancement activities.

Steven is a graduate of Florida State University with an undergraduate degree in interdisciplinary social science. He is a Florida Certified Public Manager and a Florida Certified Contract Manager.



JEFFERY K. FULLER

Interim General Counsel Fifth Judicial Circuit

Fuller was named interim general counsel for the Fifth Judicial Circuit in March. He is a senior court operations consultant and serves, among other duties, as public information officer, director of outreach, emergency coordination officer and court security coordinator.

Fuller began working for the Fifth Judicial Circuit in March of 2013 as a staff attorney in Lake County Florida. He assumed his current position in 2016. He is a member of The Florida Bar, and prior to joining the Fifth Circuit, Jeff practiced law in the areas of contract, real estate, and probate. He has also worked in public relations for Walt Disney World Resort and in local TV news in Florida and Alabama.



THOMAS IOVINO

Communications Director Florida Department of Health in Manatee County

Thomas Iovino has been communications director for the Florida Department of Health in Manatee County since July 2016. He serves as primary contact for media and stakeholders in the office and coordinates media and public relations through the state communications office in Tallahassee. He is also social media manager.

He has served as a public relations strategist for Hillsborough County (2015-16), a communications specialist for Pinellas County (1998-2015), and a community relations specialist with the Pinellas County Property Appraiser's Office (1994-98).

He is highly accomplished in the Federal National Incident Management System and has been trained at the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) in Emmitsburg, Maryland. The public information and education support he has provided to emergency management through his career includes:

- 23 tropical storm/hurricane activations
- 2012 Republican National Convention
- Major water and wastewater system outages

continued

- 2016 Zika outbreak
- 2014 Ebola activations
- 2009 H1N1 influenza outbreak
- Wildfires, large-scale accidents, and other various emergencies

Iovino was part of the deployment team to New York City in response to Hurricane Sandy in 2012. He has produced several educational and emergency preparation videos, and has been the recipient of numerous educational excellence awards through the Florida Governor's and National Hurricane Conferences. He runs a popular woodworking blog called Tom's Workbench (www.tomsworkbench.com) and is an enthusiastic home chef.

Iovino holds a bachelor's degree in English Literature and Language from the University of Maryland in College Park.



MICHAEL HIGER

The Florida Bar President

Michael J. Higer is a Partner of Berger Singerman's Dispute Resolution Team and is an experienced litigator and trial lawyer who has devoted his practice to commercial litigation and civil trial work involving a wide variety of matters.

Higer is the president of The Florida Bar. He is A/V rated by Martindale Hubbell®, the highest available rating. The Best Lawyers in America®, Florida Trend magazine's Florida Legal Elite™ and Florida Super Lawyers have all repeatedly recognized him in his practice areas. The South Florida Business Journal featured Higer in its Book of Law. He is widely regarded as one of the architects of the business courts established in Florida. The Florida Bar, Business Law Section recognized him as its Outstanding Member in 2005, and he is a former chair of that section.

Higer's practice has principally focused on debtor/creditor, intellectual property and insurance matters. He has represented both debtors and creditors in litigation involving multimillions of dollars in loans and has represented both some of the largest local and national lending institutions and prominent real estate developers. He has represented his lender and debtor clients in foreclosures of commercial property, workouts, and reorganizations involving well in excess of \$300 million. Higer has also represented clients in intellectual property litigation involving patents, trademarks, copyright, computer software, covenants not to compete, unfair competition and related matters. In doing so, he has successfully represented high-profile clients involving delicate matters with national interest as well as representing small business owners whose exposure threatened their economic existence. Higer has also extensively represented insureds in first-party insurance disputes. Higer has represented his clients in these matters both in the state and federal trial courts, the state and federal appellate courts, the Florida Supreme Court and the U.S. Supreme Court.

Born in Miami Beach, Higer earned a bachelor's degree in 1982 from the University of Florida and his Juris Doctorate degree with honors in 1985 from the University of Miami School of Law where he served as the executive editor of the Law Review. Immediately following graduation, he went to work as a commercial litigator with the law firm of Fine Jacobson Schwartz Nash Block & England, P.A. Shortly thereafter, he joined the law firm of Coll Davidson Carter Smith Salter & Barkett, P.A. where he became the first lawyer to be named a shareholder by the founding shareholders, and in 2006 formed Higer Lichter & Givner, LLP.

continued



SANDRA DIAMOND

The Florida Bar Board of Governors Constitution Revision Commission Chair

Diamond serves as one of 52 members of The Florida Bar Board of Governors, representing the Sixth Judicial Circuit. She was awarded The Florida Bar President's Award of Merit for her leadership of the The Vote's in Your Court campaign, which provided public education for the 2016 judicial merit retention of the Florida Supreme Court. Currently, she chairs The Florida Bar's Special Committee on the Constitution Revision Commission.

She is board certified by The Florida Bar in Wills, Trusts and Estates.

She is a fellow of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel, a former chair of the Real Property, Probate and Trust Law Section of The Florida Bar, and a member of Florida Trend's Legal Elite Hall of Fame.

Diamond is the recipient of The Florida Bar's Real Property, Probate and Trust Law Section's William S. Belcher Lifetime Professionalism Award, the John Arthur Jones Annual Service Award, and the Robert C. Scott Memorial Award. She was named one of the Top 50 Women Florida Super Lawyers in 2009.

She currently serves as Chairman of the Board of Trustees for Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital. Sandra and her late husband, Dr. Frank B. Diamond Jr., were recognized in 2008 with All Children's Hospital's William Belcher Award for their service to the hospital and her advocacy for children's health care.

Diamond earned her law degree from Villanova University, a master's degree from Trinity College and her bachelor's degree from Smith University. She is admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court and all Florida state courts.



PK JAMESON

State Courts Administrator

Patricia (PK) Jameson began serving as State Courts Administrator July 1, 2014.

After leaving the private practice of law, she gained extensive experience in the Florida Legislature and in the executive branch of government. Her legislative positions include chief of staff for the House of Representatives, and staff director of the following committees: Judiciary Committee, Real Property and Probate Committee, Procedural and Redistricting Council, Select Committee on Electoral Certification Accuracy & Fairness, Joint Select Committee on the Manner of Appointment of Presidential Electors, and the Select Committee to Review the Charges of a Contested Seat. She also served as a Senior Policy Advisor to the Senate President (2008-10), and as staff director for the Committee on Children, Families and Elder Affairs.

Her undergraduate degree is in accounting and business administration, and she received her law degree from the Florida State University College of Law in 1990.

In the executive branch, her experience includes serving as a policy chief for Health and Human Services for Governor Jeb Bush, and as general counsel and director of legislative affairs for the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, and as general counsel for Florida's Chief Financial Officer and the Department of Financial Services.

Her undergraduate degree is in accounting and business administration, and she received her law degree from the Florida State University College of Law in 1990.

continued



THE HONORABLE CHARLES T. CANADY

Florida Supreme Court Justice

Justice Charles Canady was born in Lakeland in 1954. He is married to Jennifer Houghton, and they have two children. He received his bachelor's degree from Haverford College in 1976 and his law degree from the Yale Law School in 1979.

Justice Canady practiced law with the firm of Holland and Knight in Lakeland from 1979 through 1982. He practiced with the firm of Lane, Trohn, et al., from 1983 through 1992.

From November 1984 to November 1990, Justice Canady served three terms in the Florida House of Representatives, and from January 1993 to January 2001, he served four terms in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Throughout his service in Congress, Justice Canady was a member of the House Judiciary Committee. For three terms, from January 1995 to January 2001, Justice Canady was the Chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution.

Upon leaving Congress, Justice Canady became general counsel to Governor Jeb Bush. He was appointed by Governor Bush to the Second District Court of Appeal for a term beginning November 20, 2002.

On August 28, 2008, Justice Canady was appointed to the Florida Supreme Court by Governor Charlie Crist and took office on September 8, 2008. He served as chief justice from July 2010 through June 2012. In March 2018, he was elected by his colleagues to serve as Chief Justice for a second time, with his two-year term starting July 1, 2018.

ABOUT THE FCPIO

Mission

The mission of FCPIO is to promote professional education of Florida's court public information officers, to encourage their professionalism, to promote and encourage the use of best practices and ethical behavior by its members, and to serve the communities in which their courts dispense justice.

Purpose

FCPIO is a federally recognized tax-exempt educational nonprofit corporation organized in 2007 to promote discussion among Florida's court public information officers (PIOs). All Florida state court divisions were directed to appoint PIOs by then Chief Justice Charles T. Wells following a 2002 report on emergency preparedness issued by an advisory committee created after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. FCPIO meets regularly to discuss emerging developments in court and media relations with a special focus on Florida's uniquely broad public records and public meetings laws and court rules, and its continuous history of allowing broadcast coverage of court proceedings starting in 1979. The Florida Bar's public information officer is also a member as is the communications director for the Florida Bar Foundation.

2018-2020 Officers

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