

JUDICIARY TIMES

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RELIVING HISTORY AT A HISTORIC MOMENT

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Analysis: Criminal Justice Reform works

By Judge Glenn A. Grant
Acting Administrative Director of the Courts



Judge
Glenn A. Grant

Striving for daily excellence is the Judiciary's fundamental operating principle in all that we do. This approach has guided the design, implementation, and operation of Criminal Justice Reform (CJR).

Our annual CJR report released in April confirms through data that CJR is working as envisioned (see related story on Page 4.) CJR has balanced the protection of the constitutional rights of New Jersey residents with the responsibility to assure community safety.

The success of CJR to date is the result of the work of many people, both within the Judiciary and among criminal justice stakeholders, with daily excellence the goal at the organizational level as well as for the individual.

While daily excellence is foundational, we cannot take it for granted. We must make sure that our work does not become routine. Every day, we must work toward making our criminal justice system better than it was the day before.

In doing so, we will maintain our existing high standards while continuously pursuing improvement. This also encourages others to do better -- to be and to do the best they can every day while never losing sight of the common goal: a fair system of criminal justice.

Continuing to build upon these successes is one of our greatest challenges. However, it is a challenge that we can and must meet. Our organization has been and always will be constantly evolving to meet the changing needs of society and the law.

To that end, we are working with nationally recognized research experts to detect and address potential racial disparities in the criminal justice system, to better identify the risk for new domestic violence activity, and to improve the effectiveness of the pretrial monitoring program.

We are now more than two years into CJR and, while we have much to be proud of, challenges remain. With that, it is essential that we remain committed to daily excellence to ensure that CJR continues to work as intended.

We cannot rest in our efforts to institutionalize these changes into our system. We must remain invested in CJR every day to ensure that our criminal justice system remains fair and consistent. We must continuously embrace this pursuit of daily excellence.

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Chief Justice Rabner: NJ’s municipal courts are strong, but reform will strengthen them

By MaryAnn Spoto
 Communications Manager
 Administrative Office of the Courts

While New Jersey’s municipal court system has made important strides in the fair administration of justice, the effort to reform the Judiciary’s local courts continues, according to Chief Justice Stuart Rabner.

Delivering his annual State of the Judiciary address before the New Jersey State Bar Association in Atlantic City, Chief Justice Rabner said a forthcoming report from a 38-member Supreme Court committee will propose recommendations to assure that municipal courts serve as a fair and neutral forum for resolving disputes.



Chief Justice Stuart Rabner discusses reform of the municipal courts at NJ State Bar Association convention.

“Working together, we can make the system even stronger.”
 - Chief Justice Stuart Rabner

“by shining a light on the problem and following up on it.”

For example, the Supreme Court placed a cap on maximum penalties for failure to appear or failure to pay; municipal courts reduced the issuance of contempt fines by 60 percent following an Administrative Office of the Courts review; and the Supreme Court dismissed thousands of old warrants for low-level offenses so that “minor matters don’t hang over people’s lives for decades,” Chief Justice Rabner said.

“The one overarching concern, of course, is to separate a town’s need for general operating revenue from the operation of the municipal courts. Otherwise, the system can inappropriately place pressure on police officers to write tickets, and on judges to impose fines and fees,” Chief Justice Rabner said. “There is no place for either organization to be a party to raise funds for local government.”

Areas that still need to be addressed, Rabner said, include improvements to the appointment process for municipal court judges and the consolidation of municipal courts.

Chief Justice Rabner detailed some of the improvements the Judiciary made to the municipal court system in recent years

“New Jersey’s municipal court system is strong. It’s guided by strong leaders and able judges whose mission is to administer justice, and that is what they do,” Chief Justice Rabner said. “Working together, we can make the system even stronger.”

Camden Hosts Teen Interns for a Day

The Camden Vicinage joined the Camden County Technical Schools, Pennsauken and Gloucester Township campuses for an internship program, *A Day in the Life: Planting Seeds, Expanding Knowledge*. Four students, two from each campus, participated in the program, which began in November 2018 and ended in January 2019. The students spent time with each division, and division staff guided them. For operations, for example, the Camden County sheriff discussed security and students toured the Hall of Justice. The students also sat in on a criminal trial. The next program began in February.



Report: Criminal Justice Reform has begun to remove inequities caused by old cash bail system

By Peter McAleer and MaryAnn Spoto
Office of Communications and Community Relations
Administrative Office of the Courts

As New Jersey's jail population continues to decline, a report released in April by the Administrative Office of the Courts shows that Criminal Justice Reform defendants are no more likely to commit a new offense or fail to show up for a court appearance than defendants released under the prior system of monetary bail.

The Judiciary's Annual Report on Criminal Justice Reform concluded that New Jersey's jail population now consists largely of defendants accused of violent crimes or other serious offenses. At the same time, defendants who pose little risk of committing another crime or fleeing from justice - but cannot afford bail - are no longer spending weeks and months in jail while presumed innocent, according to the report.

"New Jersey's criminal justice system has begun to remove inequities created by the heavy reliance on monetary bail," said Chief Justice Stuart Rabner. "The annual report reveals that Criminal Justice Reform has reduced the unnecessary detention of low-risk defendants, ensured community safety, upheld constitutional principles, and preserved the integrity of the criminal justice system."

The Annual Report begins with a research project that provides, for the first time, a statistical comparison between CJR in 2017 and the monetary bail system in 2014. It also includes a study that compares the jail population on a single day, Oct. 3, in both 2012 and 2018.

Public Safety

Among other performance measurements, the research project compared the recidivism and court appearance rates for both CJR defendants and defendants subject to the previous system that relied heavily on monetary bail. It found the following:

- Defendants were charged with indictable crimes while on pretrial release at virtually the same rate under both systems. In 2014, 12.7 percent of defendants were charged with an indictable offense while on pretrial release; in 2017, the percentage increased slightly to 13.7 percent.
- The percentage of defendants charged with new disorderly persons offenses increased less than 2 percent, from 11.5 percent in 2014 to 13.2 percent in 2017.
- Court appearance rates were high under both systems. On average, defendants showed up for 92.7 percent of pretrial court appearances in 2014 and 89.4 percent of court appearances in 2017. The study tracked defendants over a 22-month period, or until final disposition. It found cases were being completed in the same amount of time under both systems, demonstrating that, even if defendants missed a court

appearance, they were not more likely to flee under CJR.

- Comparing 2018 to 2012, the jail population study showed that there were thousands fewer defendants in jail under CJR, with the highest-risk defendants detained.

Specifically, the study found the following:

- On Oct. 3, 2018, 47 percent of the jail population consisted of people charged with at least one violent offense, compared to 35 percent on the same day in 2012.
- Nearly 75 percent of the 2018 jail population consisted of defendants charged with serious offenses.

The use of bail is now largely relegated to defendants who fail to appear in court or otherwise violate the conditions of pretrial release set by a judge, according to the report. In all of 2018, only 102 defendants – out of a total of 44,383 – were ordered by courts to post bail. In 90 of those cases, judges ordered bail for violations of pretrial monitoring, such as a failure to appear in court.

"New Jersey's jail population looks very different today than it did when the idea of reforming the state's criminal justice system first took hold," said Judge Glenn A. Grant, acting administrative director of the courts. "The state's jails now largely include those defendants who present a significant risk of flight or danger to the community. Low-risk defendants who lack the financial resources to post bail are now released back into the community without having to suffer the spiraling, lifechanging consequences of being detained for weeks and months while presumed innocent."

Nearly 75 percent of the 2018 jail population consisted of defendants charged with serious offenses.

Lower Jail Population

The jail population study showed 6,000 fewer people incarcerated under CJR on Oct. 3, 2018 compared to the same day in 2012. That included approximately 3,000 fewer black defendants, 1,500 fewer white defendants, and 1,300 fewer Hispanic defendants.

The report also shed light on some of the driving factors contributing to that decline. Among them:

- Early screening by prosecutors and the ready availability of objective information about a defendant's criminal history and record of court appearances have led to a substantially larger number of lower-risk defendants - 71 percent in 2017 compared to 54 percent in 2014 - being released on summonses without first being sent to jail.

- The vast majority of defendants arrested on warrants were released within 24 to 48 hours under CJR.
- Defendants sent to jail were incarcerated for substantially less time under CJR. For comparable periods, the average amount of time defendants spent from commitment until pretrial release decreased approximately 40 percent, from 62.4 days in 2014 to 37.2 days in 2017.

The decrease in jail population has led to reductions in all demographic categories. For example, the average time in jail was reduced by 10.3 days for black defendants and 5.2 days for white defendants. However, the racial and ethnic makeup within the jail population has remained largely the same. Black defendants, for example, continue to represent 54 percent of the jail population.

Next Steps

The Annual Report also identifies areas for improvement, particularly in assessing the risk of domestic violence, notifying defendants charged with disorderly persons offenses about upcoming court dates, and securing

additional resources to provide those on pretrial release with greater access to services.

In addition, the Judiciary will examine the effect of CJR on racial disparity in the criminal justice system to ensure that all defendants are treated equally.

The report also makes clear that the Pretrial Services Program faces an impending funding crisis because CJR operations continue to be funded through annual court filing fees. Without a permanent funding source, the Pretrial Services Program will reach an overall negative balance by late fiscal year 2020 or early fiscal year 2021.

“An initiative of CJR’s magnitude and importance deserves a reliable, sustainable source of funding to continue to fulfill its mission fully and properly,” Judge Grant said. “We must continue our efforts to create and maintain the best possible criminal justice system for New Jersey and remain a model for the nation to follow.”

The full report can be found at njcourts.gov.

Camden Vicinage celebrates Women’s History Month

Supreme Court Justices Jaynee LaVecchia and Anne M. Patterson were the featured speakers for the Camden Vicinage’s Women’s History Month celebration on March 20. The event, also attended by Justices Lee Solomon and Faustino Fernandez-Vina, highlighted the accomplishments of women throughout history. The vicinage’s female judges presented questions to the panel. Assignment Judge Deborah Silverman Katz moderated.



New flags accent courtyard at Camden County Hall of Justice

Camden County Sheriff’s Department officers raise new flags outside of the Camden County Hall of Justice in Camden on the morning of April 16. The flags accentuate a new courtyard that was built in front of the building.



Editor’s Note

Feature stories about court programs and newsworthy profiles about judges and court staff are welcome.

Submissions can be sent to Mike.Mathis@njcourts.gov.

Judiciary celebrates Black History Month

Atlantic/Cape May

The Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage's Children in Court Unit decorated and brought food to celebrate Black History Month. Jawwaad Johnson, Lauren Habsroh and Shawna Gilliam are shown with an art piece created by Lauren Habsroh for the festivity.

From left: Jawwaad Johnson, Lauren Habsroh and Shawna Gilliam.



Camden

The Camden Vicinage's Black History Month program on March 13 discussed the intersection of free speech, free exercise of religion and civil rights.

The program, which included a question-and-answer session, explored how diversity contributes to a stronger society.

The panel included Superior Court Judges Sohail Mohammed and Morris G. Smith and retired Superior Court Judge Robert Millenky. Assignment Judge Deborah Silverman Katz moderated.



Monmouth

The Monmouth Vicinage continued its celebration of Black History Month on March 8 with a program titled "Honoring our Local Heroes." The program highlighted the Lewis family of Freehold, which sent six sons to the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II. The Rev. Ronald Sparks of the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Freehold introduced members of the Lewis family and a local historian shared stories about their background.

The program also featured musical performances by the Jazz Arts Project's Jazz Academy All Star, a display of African cultural artifacts and artwork by a local artist. Assignment Judge Lisa P. Thornton; Judge Lourdes Lucas, chair of the Vicinage EEO/AA Advisory Committee; and Judge Mara Zazzali-Hogan, chair of the Vicinage Advisory Committee on Minority Concerns, gave remarks.



Passaic

The Passaic Vicinage commemorated Black History Month with a special program on Feb. 22. Hester H. Agudosi, chief diversity officer for New Jersey, was keynote speaker. A soloist from the Rosa Parks School of Fine and Performing Arts in Paterson performed and the Junior ROTC from Eastside High School of Government and Public Administration in Paterson presented the colors and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Office of Probation Services

Feb. 1 marked the beginning of Black History Month, a time to honor the contributions and achievements of African Americans throughout history.

In each of the past 15 years, the Office of Probation Services has hosted a month-long celebration of African-American history.

This year, the office presented *Black History through Film*, a series based on the true stories of African Americans that reflected the rich diversity of experiences of people of African descent. The screenings included *12 Years a Slave*, *Red Tails*, *20 Feet From Stardom*, *The Butler* and *Eyes on the Prize*. Posters, artifacts and paintings were displayed in an area of the office that was designated the Probation Black History Museum.

The month's events concluded with the 15th Annual Black History Month program and luncheon, which featured African-American cuisine and keynote speaker, Lawrence Hamm, a human and civil rights activist who reflected on his more than 45 years of experiences advocating for social justice.

Diane Jenkins, one of the founding organizers of the annual celebration who is retiring after 23 years of service to the Judiciary, was recognized for her commitment and service to organizing the event.



This year's Probation Black History Museum featured posters, artifacts and paintings.



Using creativity to change youth behavior

By Cory DiBiase
Vicinage Assistant Chief Probation Officer
Morris/Sussex Vicinage

Probation Services, long known for hosting an annual Olympic-style competition for youth, is tapping the artistic talents of juvenile probationers. The Probation Juvenile Art Contest was held for the first time last year. Youth submitted poems, photographs and sketches in what officials hope will become an annual contest.

In Sussex County, for example, submissions were judged by Superior Court Judge Lorraine Augostini, who also presided over a ceremony on Jan. 28 for entrants and their families. Rashad Shabaka-Burns, director of probation services; Stacey Gerard, assistant chief of juvenile services; Morris/Sussex Vicinage Chief Probation Officer Mike Lasko and Assistant Trial Court Administrator Thomas Jindracek also attended. The children described their work to the judge and audience and explained where they came from, how they felt and where they envision themselves in the future. The pride on their faces was clear. It was humbling to remember that some of the children have received little or no positive recognition in their lives. To shake the hand of a judge, the statewide probation director and hear applause for their work can mean much to them.



From left to right: Michael Lasko, vicinage chief probation officer, Judge Lorraine Augostini, Assistant Chief Stacey Gerard, Vicinage Assist. Chief Cory DiBiase and Director Rashad Shabaka-Burns stand in front of work produced by juvenile probationers.

increase positive results with clients. When it comes to working with youth, the research strongly suggests that positive reactions, incentives, and reinforcement for good choices helps reduce future delinquent behavior.

It also has been shown that family support and engagement with these youth can bring about positive results.

Jeanne T. Covert named assignment judge in Burlington Vicinage

By MaryAnn Spoto
Communications Manager
Administrative Office of the Courts

Chief Justice Stuart Rabner has selected Superior Court Judge Jeanne T. Covert to lead the Burlington Vicinage, effective July 1. Judge Covert will succeed Assignment Judge Ronald E. Bookbinder, who is retiring after 29 years on the bench and more than 10 years as assignment judge.

"Judge Covert's leadership has been invaluable on a range of important issues, including Criminal Justice Reform and Drug Court," Chief Justice Rabner said. "The Burlington Vicinage has excelled under the outstanding guidance of Judge Bookbinder. I am confident that will continue under Judge Covert."

In more than 13 years at the Burlington Vicinage, Judge Covert has served in the family, criminal and civil divisions. She served in the family division for four years after being appointed to the bench. Judge Covert moved to the criminal division in 2009. The following year, she was named presiding judge of the criminal division and served in that capacity until she moved in September 2018 to the civil division, where she is presiding judge.

"I am humbled and honored to be named assignment judge, and I want to thank Chief Justice Rabner for allowing me this unique opportunity to further serve the citizens of Burlington County," Judge Covert said. "I hope to maintain the tradition of excellence set by Judge Bookbinder, and I look forward to working with the incredible staff and judges in the Burlington Vicinage."



Judge Jeanne T. Covert

Judge Covert was appointed to the bench by acting Gov. Richard Codey and took the oath of judicial office on July 1, 2005. She was reappointed by Gov. Chris Christie and received tenure on May 25, 2012. She served as chair of the Judiciary's Drug Court Advisory Committee from 2017 to 2018 and was chair of the Conference of Criminal Presiding Judges from 2012 to 2017. She was a member of the Supreme Court Committee on Judicial Salaries and Pensions from 2014 to 2018 and the Court's Speedy Trial Working Group in 2013 in preparation for Criminal Justice Reform.

Prior to her judicial career, Judge Covert worked for four years as an assistant prosecutor in the appellate unit of the Camden County Prosecutor's Office. She was a municipal public defender for Bordentown Township from 1995 to 2001 and was a public defender in Mansfield, Maple Shade and Edgewater Park from 1992 to 1995. She was in private practice with the law firm Call & Covert in Mount Holly from 1989 to 2000 after working four years as an assistant prosecutor in the Burlington County Prosecutor's Office. A 1985 graduate of Rutgers University School of Law – Camden, Judge Covert earned her bachelor's degree in communications from the University of Delaware.

Career Snapshot

Chair of the Judiciary's Drug Court Advisory Committee

Chair of the Conference of Criminal Presiding Judges

Member of Court's Speedy Trial Working Group

Alba R. Rivera named trial court administrator in Burlington Vicinage

By MaryAnn Spoto
Communications Manager
Administrative Office of the Courts

Incoming Assignment Judge Jeanne Covert of the Burlington Vicinage has named Alba R. Rivera as trial court administrator, effective in May. Rivera succeeds Jude Del Preore, who retires after nearly 45 years with the Judiciary, the last 15 with the vicinage.

"Jude Del Preore has earned national recognition that reflects prominently on the New Jersey Judiciary as well," said Judge Glenn A. Grant, acting administrative director of the courts. "The Burlington Vicinage has benefited greatly from his many years of service and I am confident Alba Rivera will continue that tradition of excellence."

Rivera has served as the criminal division manager in the Camden Vicinage since 2015. She previously served as jury manager in the vicinage from 2013 to 2015. She started with the Judiciary in October 2011 as a court services supervisor in the Children in Court Unit of the vicinage's family division. Before joining the Judiciary, Rivera served as legal counsel for the New Jersey Coalition Against Domestic Violence. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Penn State University and a law degree from Ohio State University. Rivera served as a law clerk for Superior Court Judges Michael J. Hogan, Craig L. Wellerson and Susan L. Claypoole in the Burlington Vicinage.

"It is with great enthusiasm that we welcome Alba Rivera to the Burlington Vicinage as our new trial court administrator," Judge Covert said. "Ms. Rivera brings a broad array of experience, energy, and commitment to this important position, and I have every confidence that she will be a tremendous asset to the vicinage and to the citizens of Burlington County."

Del Preore held positions in the family and probation divisions before becoming trial court administrator in the Mercer Vicinage in 1997. He was appointed trial court administrator in Burlington in 2004. He is a fellow for the Institute for Court Management of the National Center for State Courts and a recipient of the ICM's Star Award.

"Jude is a nationally recognized expert on court management," said Assignment Judge Ronald E. Bookbinder. "The citizens of Burlington County and the state of New Jersey have been fortunate to receive his outstanding service for many years."

The trial court administrator is the highest-ranking staff executive in the vicinage in charge of all court operations, including financial management, human resources, information systems, case coordination, case flow



Alba R. Rivera

management, probation services, jury utilization, facilities, equipment, maintenance, records management and statistical analysis.

"I am honored and humbled for the opportunity to serve the residents of Burlington County as the trial court administrator," Rivera said. "I look forward to working alongside Judge Covert, Judge Bookbinder and the dedicated judges, managers and staff of the Burlington Vicinage in continuing the tradition of excellence that the vicinage is known for."

Career Snapshot

Criminal division manager in Camden Vicinage

Jury manager in Camden Vicinage

After courtroom encounter, a dream realized years later

By Mike Mathis
Judiciary Times Editor

Superior Court Judge Charles W. Dortch Jr. knows he has made a lasting impression on some of the thousands of kids who have appeared before him in family court in the Camden Vicinage. He just doesn't usually hear about them, he said. But with Carmen Day, he did.

Judge Dortch made such an impression on Day with his courtroom demeanor and in the way he handled her case when she was in his courtroom that she made it a point to tell him. During a recent visit to the courthouse, she wanted him to know their interaction more than a decade ago solidified her decision to become a lawyer so that she, like he, could be a positive influence on others.

"I always knew I wanted to be a lawyer," said Day, 29, who was raised in Pennsauken and now lives in Sicklerville, both in Camden County. "He reinforced that and was an example of why we need people like him in this field."

"I saw a lot of persistence in her eyes and in her voice. She wanted to make something of herself.

- Superior Court Judge Charles W. Dortch Jr.

She let him know that in person during a surprise visit to the Camden County Hall of Justice early this year.

Judge Dortch said he has an open door policy in his courtroom and Day was among four Rutgers students who visited him after court in January. He remembered Day. He remembered being impressed with how she conducted herself in court when she came before him for sentencing 12 years ago.

"I could tell in her manner of speaking she was struggling to make the best of her life," Judge Dortch recalled. "I saw a lot of persistence in her eyes and in her voice. She wanted to make something of herself."

Day was just 17 when she appeared before Judge Dortch in December 2006. The judge could have sentenced her to 18 months of probation, but Day convinced him to shorten



Superior Court Judge Charles W. Dortch Jr. and Carmen Day. (Photo provided by Maria Gonzalez)

the term to six months so that her term would be finished when she graduated from Pennsauken High School in June 2007.

Judge Dortch said Day's attorney asked that she be allowed to speak. "I knew I needed to communicate to him what my goals were," Day said. "He really heard me and listened to what I had to say."

"I knew I made a silly mistake," she said of the reason for her family court matter. As Day watched the other cases before hers, she recalled at least one other defendant being rude to the judge.

"He was very disrespectful with Judge Dortch, and I felt bad and knew I had to make a good impression," Day said. Judge Dortch said he had no contact with Day after she appeared in his courtroom but that she wrote him a letter and he later learned that she was attending law school "but I didn't know a lot more than that."

Day graduated magna cum laude from Rutgers University-Camden with degrees in political science and criminal justice. She is scheduled to finish classes at Rutgers University School of Law-Camden in the fall and plans to take the bar exam in February. She hopes to practice employment law and also is interested in juvenile justice reform.

During that courthouse visit in January, she felt she had to tell Judge Dortch who she was and how he helped her.

Continued on page 11

"She said, 'Judge, I'm Carmen Day,'" Judge Dortch recalled. "She said 'I wanted to thank you for all you did for me.' I told her I was proud of her."

"She'll be a great asset to the profession and a great addition to the community as well," Judge Dortch said. "There is no substitute for the human spirit. It's stronger than all of us. She has to grab it and hold onto it." For Judge Dortch, Day's persistence to thank him and forge ahead reinforced in him the positive impact judges can have on those who appear before them and diminish the anguish families often experience.

"In family, in addition to many challenges, you have an opportunity to have an impact so that families and children can move ahead in their lives," he said. "I'm always so honored to have the chance to intervene, to make these decisions."

Justice Patterson relives history through landmark case at Dartmouth College

By Mike Mathis
Judiciary Times Editor

New Jersey Supreme Court Associate Justice Anne M. Patterson got a unique chance to relive history at her alma mater.

Justice Patterson participated in the re-argument of the U.S. Supreme Court case *Trustees of Dartmouth College v. Woodward* in March at the college's campus in Hanover, New Hampshire. The case established Dartmouth's right to be a private institution and established an important precedent in American law: that private corporations have constitutional protections from state interference.

Justice Patterson was on a panel that included Justice James Bassett of the New Hampshire Supreme Court; retired Justice Robert Cordy of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court; Judge Gregg Costa of the U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit; Judge Abdul Kallon of the U.S. District Court, Northern District of Alabama and Justice Beth Robinson of the Vermont Supreme Court. All are Dartmouth graduates.

Former Acting U.S. Solicitor General Neal Katyal and former U.S. Solicitor General Greg Garre, who also are Dartmouth graduates, reargued the case. The re-argument of *Trustees of Dartmouth College v. Woodward* was part of Dartmouth's yearlong 250th anniversary celebration and the 200th anniversary of the landmark ruling. The college held a two-day symposium on March 1-2 at which nearly 300 students, faculty, alumni, and community members explored the influence of the case on the college and on American legal history.

Justice Patterson also sat on a panel of jurists that included U.S. Supreme Court Chief John G. Roberts Jr. during a re-arguing of the case in January at the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington, D.C.

"I was honored to represent the New Jersey Supreme Court and our Judiciary in the two Dartmouth College case re-arguments," Justice Patterson said. "It was a great privilege to work with Chief Justice Roberts, distinguished judges from six states, and two outstanding appellate advocates



Retired Justice Robert Cordy of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, Justice James Bassett of the New Hampshire Supreme Court, and Associate Justice Anne M. Patterson. (Photo provided by Dartmouth College)

celebrating the bicentennial of the most important event in Dartmouth's history."

Dartmouth College was established in 1769 by Eleazar Wheelock and was chartered by King George III. A private institution, Dartmouth is the ninth-oldest institution of higher education in the United States. The focus of *Dartmouth College v. Woodward* was whether the New Hampshire state legislature could void Dartmouth's colonial-era charter.

In 1816, the New Hampshire legislature briefly turned Dartmouth into a public university, which Dartmouth ultimately appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. The court, in an opinion authored by Chief Justice John Marshall and handed down in 1819, established that private corporations have constitutional protections from state interference. A video of the re-arguments at Dartmouth can be viewed on [Dartmouth College's YouTube channel](#).

Spotlight: Hudson County Courthouse

Editor's Note: This story is the 11th in a series detailing the rich histories of New Jersey's courthouses.

By Mike Mathis
Judiciary Times Editor

Standing inside the William J. Brennan Historic Courthouse in Jersey City, it is difficult to believe that the structure - one of New Jersey's architectural and cultural gems - nearly became a pile of rubble.

The granite, six-story structure on Newark Avenue, featuring a copper cupola and towering pillars outside, opened as the seat of Hudson County government and the courts in 1910. The groundbreaking took place on March 21, 1906. The building opened on Sept. 20, 1910.

The courthouse served as the seat of Hudson County government from its opening until the more modern Hudson County Administration Building opened next door in 1966. Sitting vacant for years, the old courthouse began to deteriorate and much of its original bronze had been stolen and its artwork damaged.

The old courthouse was scheduled for demolition, but local citizens successfully worked to have it placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1970, according to the brochure. Some county employees began restorative work in the mid-1970s, employing workers hired through the federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973, and later local artists and craftsmen. The building reopened in 1985 with the relocation of the civil courts from the administration building.

The Hudson County executive relocated to the building in 1989. That year, the Hudson County Board of Freeholders renamed the courthouse in honor of William J. Brennan Jr., who served as assignment judge in the Hudson Vicinage from 1949 to 1951 before becoming an associate

Built: 1910

Cost: \$3.3 million

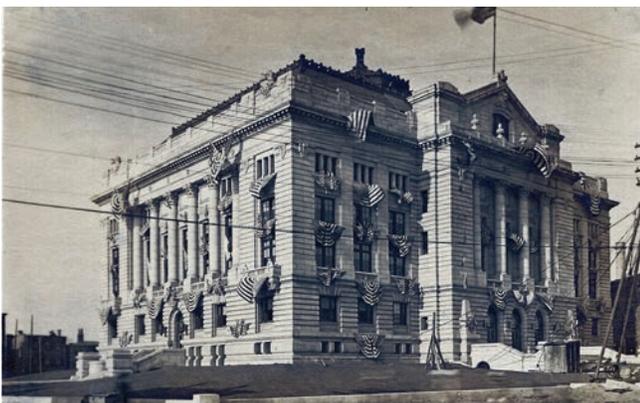
Architect: Hugh Roberts of Jersey City

Interior Design: Francis D. Millet

justice on both the New Jersey Supreme Court and U.S. Supreme Court.

The courthouse has eight courtrooms in operation and also houses the offices of the Hudson County executive, surrogate and the Hudson County Bar Association. It is noted for its ornate balcony, stained glass, and impressive hand-painted murals depicting the state's early history. The artwork continues to be one of the courthouse's most captivating features. Architect Hugh Roberts delegated the interior design to Francis D. Millet, who was director of decorating for the 1893 Columbian Exposition, also known as the Chicago World's Fair. Millet commissioned four artists, each of whom had worked with him on the then-recently completed Essex County Courthouse in Newark, now the Historic Courthouse, for the paintings.

The extensive art collection includes relief portraits of Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton and murals depicting the purchase by Dutch settlers of land in New Jersey and Gen. George Washington at Fort Lee. The Brennan Courthouse was one of Millet's last commissions; he died in the sinking of the Titanic in 1912.



The William J. Brennan Historic Courthouse as it appeared when it opened in 1910. (Photo courtesy of the Jersey City Free Public Library)



The Hudson County Courthouse as it appears today.