



## Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

# News

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### **Supreme Court to embed technician in Marion County Circuit Clerk's Office** For immediate release Monday, April 19, 2010

**FAIRMONT, W.Va. – A Supreme Court technician will be embedded in the Marion County Circuit Clerk's office for two weeks beginning today, April 19 as the first step toward expanding the Unified Judicial Application (UJA) system to circuit courts throughout the state.**

**Andrea Snyder, a UJA Trainer, will be in Marion County to observe how the clerk's office uses its current computer system to do its daily business.**

**Ms. Snyder will be shadowing Marion County Circuit Clerk Barbara Core.**

**"We are looking forward to her being here," said Ms. Core. "We are going to put her right to work."**

**"She is to digest as much as she can about the basic processes in circuit clerks offices generally and Marion County specifically, with an eye on how we can use that information to have the best possible transition to the UJA when we get to rolling it out in circuit clerks' offices statewide," said Supreme Court Administrative Director Steve Canterbury.**

**"That's a few years away, but we have to start our planning now, and we have to start getting information about the best technological practices before we start to determine how we will fold them into the UJA," Mr. Canterbury said.**

**"Every educator knows that if a student can go to Harvard or Berkeley, then that's where that student should go to get the best possible exposure to the best minds. The 'Harvard' of circuit clerk technology is in Marion County," Mr. Canterbury said.**

**The UJA is fully functional in the Greenbrier County Magistrate Clerk's Office. It is scheduled to be expanded to the second beta test site, the Monongalia County Magistrate Clerk's Office, on November 1, 2010. It will be rolled out to other magistrate clerks' offices, likely several at a time, until all offices are connected.**

**Once the UJA is operational in all magistrate clerks' offices, the Supreme Court will begin beta tests in selected circuit clerks' offices, then expand it statewide to all circuit clerks' offices. Family courts and probation offices will follow.**

**When the UJA was implemented in Greenbrier County, "we came in cold turkey. It slowed us down. We don't want that same delay to occur in circuit clerks'**

offices,” said Duane Neely, the Director of Technology Services for the Supreme Court Administrative Office.

To prevent such a delay, Ms. Snyder specifically will study the Marion County Circuit Clerk’s case management and business processes, Mr. Neely said. She has had three years of experience working on the UJA development and implementation in magistrate court, and so she should be able to write a series of reports detailing how to integrate the circuit clerks’ office work into the Court’s UJA technology to ensure a smooth integration.

Ms. Snyder also will recognize if there are incompatibilities that need to be addressed up-front, Mr. Neely said.

“We are going to teach her how a circuit clerk’s office operates and ties into the (UJA) technology,” said Ms. Core. “This is the first step in learning how a circuit clerk’s office operates and what technology we are going to need to make the systems work statewide.”

Eventually, Ms. Snyder will visit at least two other circuit clerks’ offices in counties that have yet to be named. She will also return to Marion County if she feels she needs to do more work there.

The UJA case management system will standardize the processes and computer programs used in magistrate courts, family courts, circuit courts, probation, and treatment courts throughout the state. The system will have a centralized database and will allow greater access to court information and statistics for not only court employees but for the media and the public-at-large.

The Supreme Court is committed to improving the court system’s accountability. The UJA will provide more accurate crime statistics to the public and the Legislature, which will provide better information on which to base public policy decisions. The system also will be able to supply privacy-secured electronic information to public agencies, including the Division of Motor Vehicles, the State Police, the Regional Jail and Correctional Facility Authority, the Department of Health and Human Resources, and the Division of Corrections.

Under the UJA, all counties will have a similar computer system and they will be linked, so a person’s complete activity with the court system will be quickly available at each courthouse. The UJA also will allow more efficient recordkeeping of court costs and fines that are collected, and more effective auditing to ensure those collections are distributed to programs which they fund.

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