



## Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

# News

Administrative Office  
1900 Kanawha Blvd., East  
Bldg. 1, Room E-316  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305  
(304) 340-2305 Jennifer Bundy  
(304) 340-2306 April Harless  
(304) 558-4219 / TTY  
(304) 558-1212 / FAX  
Web Site: <http://www.state.wv.us/wvsca>  
Information Services Division  
Email: [Jennifer.bundy@courtwv.gov](mailto:Jennifer.bundy@courtwv.gov)  
Email: [April.harless@courtsww.gov](mailto:April.harless@courtsww.gov)

### **Chief Justice swears in probation officers to supervise sex offenders in Northern Panhandle** **For immediate release Tuesday, November 09, 2010**

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The Northern Panhandle now has six new probation officers whose job is solely to supervise sex offenders.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Robin Jean Davis today conducted a swearing-in ceremony for six new specialized sex offender intensive supervision officers, or SOISOs.

“We see some horrific things here at our Court,” Chief Justice Davis said. “You men and women are on the front line.”



Chief Justice Robin Jean Davis congratulates one of the new specialized sex offender intensive supervision officers, or SOISOs, after she swore them in on November 9, 2010, in the Supreme Court Chamber. The six officers will work in Region Three, which consists of Brooke, Ohio, Hancock, Marshall, Wetzel, Tyler, Pleasants, Ritchie, Doddridge, Wirt, and Wood Counties.  
*Photo by Michael Switzer*

She thanked the officers for their service and their work. “You protect the children of our state,” she said.

John Barker of Fairmont, Robert “Brent” Hurley of Wheeling, Terry Layfield of Clarksburg, Sherri Krampe of Parkersburg, and Charles Rose and Michael Rose of Moundsville were sworn in during the 11 a.m. ceremony in the Supreme Court Chamber.

The officers work in Region Three, which consists of Brooke, Ohio, Hancock, Marshall, Wetzel, Tyler, Pleasants, Ritchie, Doddridge, Wirt, and Wood Counties.

The specialized officers work under provisions of the Child Protection Act of 2006 (House Bill 101, passed June 14, 2006). The law requires extended supervision for sexual offenders, especially those convicted of crimes against children.

The officers’ only duty is to supervise sex offenders. They work out of their cars, not offices. They work holidays, nights, weekends, and hours in between to provide intensive supervision. The officers also work with circuit court judges and treatment providers to make sure offenders are complying with court orders. The extended supervision includes polygraph examinations and electronic monitoring.

The Legislature chose probation officers for this work although parole officers normally work with post-incarceration criminals because probation officers in West Virginia have an extraordinarily good reputation, said Supreme Court Administrative Director Steve Canterbury.

Sex offender supervision officers are among the “best of the best” of probation officers, he said.

Sex offenders in the program “are the ones the judges felt needed extraordinary supervision after parole,” Mr. Canterbury said.

From his years as Executive Director of the regional jail system, Mr. Canterbury said he knows that sex offenders “are a surprising group.” Pedophiles are the quietest inmates, the neatest and rule followers. And they are like that in society, where they are often Boy Scout leaders and church leaders, he said.

“Don’t be seduced. They really are like your favorite uncle,” he told the new officers. “You must be on your guard.”

Mr. Canterbury also told the officers that while the Supreme Court and the court administration will appreciate them, they should not expect praise or thanks from the community.

“You will be unsung and unseen,” he said. “For those of you who excel at this, you are doing one the greatest jobs. Like the Secret Service that protects the President, you know they are there, but they blend in.”

The first group of sexual offender probation officers was hired in November 2008. The supervision program is being expanded one region at a time throughout the state. A total of thirty probation officers eventually will be hired in six regions to carry out provisions of the law.

With the hiring of these officers, there are now twenty-one SOISO officers in thirty-five counties. Officers are expected to be hired in the last two regions next year, said Mike Lacy, Director of Probation Services.

The SOISO program was developed under the leadership of Chief Justice Davis when she was Chief Justice in 2006 and 2007. Her support was crucial in refining the vision of the supervision protocol. Her work was a continuation of her interest in protecting children in our communities during her "Year of the Child" in 2006 and "Year of the Child, Too" in 2007.

“I believe our families and our communities are much safer than they were,” Mr. Lacy said.

##