



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

July 20, 2011

TAP Contact: Tamara L. Beard – 559.457.2010
tbeard@fresno.courts.ca.gov

Electronic Writ Contact: Charlene Ynson - 559.445.5989
charlene.ynson@jud.ca.gov

Fifth Appellate District and the Superior Courts of Fresno and Stanislaus Counties Win Top Award

Judicial Council Honors Transcript Assembly Program (TAP) and the Electronic Writ Processing Program for Innovative Approaches to Serving the Public

Fresno —The Judicial Council of California has selected the Court of Appeal, Fifth Appellate District, and the Superior Courts of Fresno and Stanislaus Counties' Transcript Assembly Program (TAP) as recipients of the 2010–2011 Ralph N. Kleps Award for Improvement in Administration of the Courts.

The Fifth Appellate District received an additional Kleps Award for its Electronic Writ Processing Program. This is the first time in the history of the award process that an appellate court has won two awards in one year!

The Kleps Award is the highest award given to state courts each year by the Judicial Council, the policymaking body of state courts chaired by Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye.

“The TAP program is truly one of the best collaborative and innovative technological programs implemented in the courts. It has already cut the appellate case processing workload from 50-75% allowing the courts to partially offset staffing reductions during this fiscal crisis,” stated Tamara Beard, Court Executive Officer, Superior Court of Fresno County.

The TAP program will be celebrated on July 25, 2011 at 12:15 p.m. at a gathering at the Fresno Superior Court B.F. Sisk Courthouse, 1130 O Street, Fresno. The Court of Appeal, Fifth Appellate District's award for the Electronic Writ Processing Program will also be presented on July 25, 2011 at 2:00 p.m. at the Fifth Appellate District, 2424 Ventura Street, Fresno. Members of the press are invited to attend.

Created in 1991 in honor of Ralph N. Kleps, the first Administrative Director of the Courts in California, the biennial awards program recognizes innovation in the state's courts.

“As the judicial branch faces unprecedented economic challenges, the spirit of innovation in our courts is essential and deserves to be applauded,” stated Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye and Administrative Director of the Courts William C. Vickrey. “It is through award-winning programs like these that the courts are streamlining the administration of justice and enhancing services for the communities that they serve.”

The Judicial Council selected 7 exemplary programs from a field of 16 statewide nominations. Summaries of the award-winning programs follow:

2010–2011 KLEPS AWARD RECIPIENTS

Trial Court Awards

Automated Civil Grand Jury Program: *Superior Court of California, County of Monterey*
This court-developed, web-based application automates the entire civil grand jury recruitment and selection process. It enables the court to maintain summary demographics information for civil grand jurors and publishes this information on the court’s public website, fostering openness and transparency, in accordance with rule 10.625, of the California Rules of Court. This integrated solution has also streamlined civil grand jury work processes for the jury commissioner’s office, resulting in operational efficiencies and overall cost savings to the court.

Automated Mail Payment Processing System aka “Magic Money Machine”: *Superior Court of California, County of San Bernardino*
This system allows the court to centralize and automate the processing of thousands of payments received daily via mail. Work previously performed at 11 locations by 17 employees is now processed by a machine and 4 clerks at a central location, representing a 76.4 percent savings in personnel and facilities costs. In addition to significant cost savings to the court, the improved process enables the court to apply payments to customer accounts within one working day, directly benefiting the public.

Elder Court: *Superior Court of California, County of Contra Costa*
This court addresses cases involving harm to seniors, including physical, emotional, and financial abuse. One judge oversees the entire process, hearing all criminal and civil cases, including restraining order requests, small claims cases, and conservatorship cases. Elder court brings together community partners with services that assist the elderly, giving them immediate access to support services, including volunteer senior peer counselors, a senior self-help clinic, mediation, and volunteer interpreters to assist before and after court.

Electronic Legal File (ELF): *Superior Court of California, County of Orange*
This easy-to-use electronic filing system integrates the court’s case management systems with a document-viewing tool. ELF anticipates the needs of the users and displays information relevant to them in their roles as judicial officer, clerk, or research attorney. ELF allows users to instantly view department calendars and retrieve electronic documents from any case at the touch of a button. ELF enables judges and staff to work efficiently in a paperless

environment—the court no longer maintains paper civil case files and has saved more than \$4 million in labor costs and time.

Orange County Combat Veterans Court: Superior Court of California, County of Orange
The first program of its kind in California, this veterans court is a dedicated criminal calendar offering therapeutic treatment instead of incarceration for combat veterans with substance abuse issues or diagnoses of posttraumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, or other psychological problems attributable to their service.

Participants receive intensive mental health and substance abuse treatment, appear before the judge often for progress reviews, and are frequently and randomly drug tested. Their program compliance is strictly overseen by their probation officer and a veterans affairs case manager, and they are linked to a wide variety of supportive services.

Appellate Court Awards

Electronic Writ Processing Program: Court of Appeal, Fifth Appellate District
This court-developed project is the first system in California to automate the distribution and disposition of cases in the appellate courts. The program allows Court of Appeal justices, research attorneys, and clerks to work collaboratively on the court’s original proceedings, eliminating the need for paper files. Justices and writ staff have the ability to receive, review, research, track case status, communicate with each other, and electronically cast their votes on these cases from any location. The project has improved caseload processing times and increased the number of dispositions per month. It saves judicial and staff time without compromising the integrity of the process.

Collaborative Project Award

Transcript Assembly Program (TAP): Court of Appeal, Fifth Appellate District, and the Superior Courts of California, Counties of Fresno and Stanislaus
This the first program in California that automates the compilation and preparation of civil clerk transcripts. The transcripts are compiled and prepared, including customizable indices, via automation and are electronically transmitted to the Court of Appeal.

The program significantly improves the business processes for these two levels of court by saving staff time, reducing paper use and storage costs, and eliminating shipping costs in forwarding transcripts to the reviewing court. It also gives the public electronic access to voluminous court records.

End