



Juries

Jury News

Research Services

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Juror Community Awareness Programs

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We know that the experience of being a juror in a well managed court is the best way to let the community know about jury service, but how about all those other people.

The Council for Court Excellence, a community supported non-profit court improvement organization in the District of Columbia instituted and developed Jury Service Appreciation Week in 1990. Jury week is recognized by the city and has many attention getting features. Spot announcements are heard on radio and television stations. Placards (see figure 1) are in the busses and on metro trains. Posters are in many metro stations. Press releases are sent to the many local and suburban papers. Judges are scheduled to speak in the schools. A videotape and teaching aid notebook are available to the schools called "Guilty or Not Guilty: You Decide." The students are divided into juries, watch the case on the videotape, deliberate to a verdict, and then discuss the case. A packet of information on the weeks' activities and helps on how to develop your own juror awareness program are available from the Council for Court Excellence at (202) 785-5917. Executive Director Sam Harahan reports that several courts across the country have used the materials and built upon them.

One of these is Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, Pa where Court Administrator Doug Leonard and staff added some interesting additional features. The theme was "Jury Service: Your Role in the Justice System." The week selected was "Law Week." The Academy of Trial Lawyers educational program was a panel of former jurors who gave "The View from the Jury Box." All during the week the theme and thanks to those who serve on jury duty were seen on the giant electronic billboard which overlooks the city from Mt. Washington. They had a booth in the lobby of the City-County Building during the week with staff in Jury T-shirts who passed out literature on jury service, demonstrated the new automation system ("see, it is random"), gave out a "juror quiz" which asked everyday jury questions (Who was the 12th Angry Man?), and even gave out bumper stickers with the slogan on it (Figure 2). A video terminal showed juror orientation videos throughout the day. Citizens serving on jury duty that week were given special lapel buttons. Local TV news covered the event with coverage focused on the booth. Doug reports that the majority of the costs were covered by corporate donations. Plans are underway for an expanded program next year. He can be reached at 412-350-5410.

One recommendation of the Jury Management Task Force looking into improving the jury system in St. Louis County, Duluth, Minnesota was the need to develop a public information and education initiative. This longer term effort had many facets which included ads and posters that were displayed around the city and in the newspapers and carried the catchy slogan "It Isn't Fair, If You're Not There."

The Judicial District Administrator, Ted Gladden said the initiative was successful because of the involvement of a number of different organizations and individuals. The Lake Superior Ad Club took on the project and provided the technical expertise in creating the multi-media approach. They produced several audio and video public service announcements using the theme. The League of Women Voters was instrumental in tying the responsibility for jury service with voter registration drives conducted district-wide throughout the year. A bus pass program was developed with the transit authority. Placards were placed in the busses as well. Mailers were specially targeted for distribution in low income and minority areas of the district. The cost to the court for all these brochures, audio and video tapes, posters and the outside help was under \$4,000. Ted has materials which he will send to you. Call for these at 218-726-2544

Inquiries regarding **Juries** or to obtain copies of any of these resources
may be directed to the Research Division Office

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1-800-616-6164

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