

Press Releases of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit

For more information, please contact our Public Information Officer, Diane Flory at (847) 377-3818

2016

Smartphones and Emergency Operations Plan

July 18, 2016: The 19th Judicial Circuit implement an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) application for employees to install on their smartphones to receive the up-to-date plan anywhere and anytime it is necessary.

Ortiz Re-Elected to Second Term as Chief Judge

June 24, 2016: A unanimous vote by the circuit judges has granted Jorge Ortiz a second term to serve as Chief Judge of the 19th Judicial Circuit. On January 1, 2017, Judge Ortiz will have completed his first year as chief judge.

Judicial Appointments to State Organizations

June 15, 2016: The Illinois Judges Association (IJA) recently elected its new officers and Board of Directors for the 2016-17 term of office. The installation of these officers and board members took place during the Association's annual meeting in early June.

Judge Elizabeth Rochford Re-Elected to ISBA Board of Governors

May 11, 2016: Elizabeth Rochford, an Associate Judge of the 19th Judicial Circuit in the Lake County, has been re-elected to the Board of Governors of the Illinois State Bar Association (ISBA).

Second Associate Judge Appointed

May 3, 2016: "I am pleased to announce that the second Associate Judge vacancy will be filled by Paul B. Novak," said Chief Judge Jorge Ortiz. Judge Ortiz received official word today from Michael Tardy, Director of the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts.

19th Judicial Circuit's New Website Launched

May 2, 2016: The 19th Judicial Circuit Court is excited to announce the launch of its new website. New design and layout, new user friendly tools, and easy navigation are just a few new features of the Court's new website.

Finalists Named for Second Associate Judge Vacancy

April 25, 2016: The Circuit Judges of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit have met and named the finalists for the second associate judge vacancy created by the Illinois Supreme Court appointment of Christen L. Bishop as Circuit Judge. Chief Judge Jorge Ortiz has certified the names of Paul B. Novak of Gurnee and Stacey L. Seneczko of Libertyville to the Director of the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts in Springfield...

New Associate Judge Appointed

April 22, 2016: "It is my pleasure to announce that Janelle K. Christensen is the next Associate Judge of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit," said Chief Judge Jorge Ortiz. Michael Tardy, Director of the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts notified Judge Ortiz early today that Ms. Christensen received the majority number of votes cast and is declared eligible for appointment to serve as one of Lake County's twenty four associate judges. "Legal ability and scholarship, organizational skills and professional temperament are just a few of the outstanding qualities Ms. Christensen has demonstrated throughout her distinguished career in private practice and as an assistant state's attorney which will serve her well as a judge," commented Judge Ortiz. "We are extremely proud of Janelle and we look forward to having her serve alongside us for many years." Janelle will fill the vacancy created by the Illinois Supreme Court appointment of Christopher Stride to Circuit Judge...

Finalists Named for Lake County Associate Judge Position

April 14, 2016: The Circuit Judges of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit have met and have named the finalists for the associate judge vacancy created by the Illinois Supreme Court appointment of Christopher R. Stride to Circuit Judge...

19th Circuit's IT Director Keynote Speaker at 2016 Mobility Summit

April 13, 2016: Winnie Webber, Information Technology Director of the 19th Judicial Circuit Court, served as keynote presenter and mobile technology spotlight speaker at the 2016 Mobility Summit currently in session. With over 21 years of experience with the 19th Judicial Circuit Court, Ms. Webber holds a BS in Math and Computer Science from the University of Manila...

National Library Week

April 5, 2016: National Library Week will celebrate its 58th anniversary this year. First sponsored in 1958, it is a week of national observance supported by the American Library Association (ALA) and libraries across the country annually during the month of April. This year, National Library Week will be observed April 10-16, 2016...

Liberty Bell Award Honorees - 2016

March 30, 2016: Each year, the 19th Judicial Circuit observes the celebration of Law Day U.S.A., a day set aside to celebrate "the rule of law." In 1961, Congress, by joint resolution, designated May 1st as the official date for celebrating Law Day. As part of the 19th Circuit's Law Day activities, the Court presents Liberty Bell Awards to an individual and an organization for their outstanding commitment and service to the community. In Lake County, the Liberty Bell plaque is presented in Memory of Judge Thomas R. Smoker, a Lake County judge who passed away in 2004...

Thirty-Two Apply for Second Associate Judge Position

March 2, 2016: On March 1, 2016, Chief Judge Jorge Ortiz received official notification from Michael Tardy, Director of the Administrative Office of Illinois, that thirty-two attorneys had timely filed applications for the associate judge vacancy created by the appointment of Christen Bishop as Circuit Judge by the Illinois Supreme Court effective February 1, 2016...

19th Judicial Circuit Employees Honored

February 29, 2016: "I am very happy and honored to be here with all of you, including all of you via video simulcast at the Juvenile Complex in Vernon Hills, to recognize the Circuit's outstanding employees for the year 2015," said Chief Judge Jorge Ortiz. "I also want to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your hard work and dedication that makes this Circuit the best in the state." ...

Twenty-Nine Submit Applications for Associate Judge Position

February 24, 2016: Chief Judge Jorge Ortiz has received notification from Michael Tardy, Director of the Administrative Office of Illinois Courts, that twenty-nine attorneys have timely filed their applications for the associate judge vacancy created by the appointment of Christopher R. Stride as Circuit Judge by the Illinois Supreme court effective January 26, 2016...

2016 High School Mock Trial Competition

February 20, 2016: A bright sunny morning with temperatures expected to reach around 50 degrees greeted high school students today as they prepare to compete against each other in Lake County's 2016 Mock Trial Invitational. Chief Judge Jorge Ortiz together with Circuit Judge Victoria Rossetti and Circuit Judge Christen Bishop were on hand to welcome all the teams as they ushered into the jury assembly room, some as early as 7:15 a.m. At approximately 8:30 a.m., Judge Ortiz stepped up to the microphone to welcome all the competing teams and to wish them all the best in their upcoming trial performances...

Mock Trial Invitational at the Courthouse

February 11, 2016: The 12th Annual Lake County High School Mock Trial Invitational will be held at the Lake County Courthouse on Saturday, February 20, 2016. Schools from Lake and several neighboring counties have registered to participate in what some schools refer to as a dress rehearsal before they go on to compete in the State's competition. The sixteen teams contending for first place in Lake County's invitational this year include Bartlett, Carmel Catholic, Chicago Christian, College Prep of America, Evanston, Highland Park, Hinsdale South, Indian Hill, Libertyville, Maine South, Maine West, Mundelein, Niles West, St. Charles East, St. Charles North, and York...

Notice of Vacancy - Second Associate Judge Position

January 28, 2016: Authorization pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court Rule 39 has been received by the Chief Judge of the 19th Judicial Circuit to post a notice of vacancy for associate judge. The vacancy is the result of the appointment of the Honorable Christen L. Bishop, Associate Judge, effective February 1, 2016, to the office of Circuit Judge, which is currently held by the Honorable Christopher C. Starck, who is retiring from judicial office on January 29, 2016. Applications are now being accepted for this vacancy which will be filled by vote of the circuit judges of the 19th Judicial Circuit...

Christen L. Bishop appointed Circuit Judge

January 25, 2015: "I am very pleased to announce today that the Supreme Court has appointed our third and newest named circuit judge, Judge Christen L. Bishop," said Chief Judge Jorge Ortiz. "Judge Bishop's legal skills and trial experience, professionalism, and conscientiousness will positively continue to well serve the Lake County community," commented Judge Ortiz...

Third Lake County Judge to Retire in January

January 14, 2016: "I was informed of yet another judicial retirement, that of Circuit Judge Christopher Starck," said Chief Judge Jorge Ortiz. "I want to thank him for his many years of service on the bench, and I am very happy for him and his family. He, too, will be sorely missed by the entire Lake County legal community."...

Adult Probation Officer Honored

January 11, 2016: Chief Judge Jorge Ortiz is proud to announce that Principal Probation Officer Brian Isom has been selected to receive the Civic Leadership Award as one of 2016's Most Influential African Americans of Lake County. Brian will be presented with this prestigious award on the evening of January 24, 2016 at the Milan Banquet Hall located at 651 Lakehurst Road in Waukegan...

Charles W. Smith Appointed Circuit Judge

January 21, 2016: "It is with great pleasure that I announce today that the Illinois Supreme Court has appointed Charles W. Smith, Attorney at Law, as a Circuit Judge of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit," said Judge Ortiz, Chief Judge. "Mr. Smith is an excellent selection and possesses outstanding qualities - experience, fairness and is highly respected in the legal community. He has had an illustrious career as a Lake County Assistant State's Attorney and in private practice. He brings many strengths to the circuit bench."...

Notice of Vacancy - Associate Judge Position

January 21, 2016: Authorization pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court Rule 39 has been received by the Chief Judge of the 19th Judicial Circuit to post a notice of vacancy for associate judge. The vacancy is the result of the appointment of the Honorable Christopher R. Stride, Associate Judge, effective January 26, 2016, to the office of Circuit Judge, which is currently held by the Honorable John T. Phillips, who is retiring from judicial office on January 25, 2016. Applications are now being accepted for this vacancy which will be filled by vote of the circuit judges of the 19th Judicial Circuit...

Christopher R. Stride Appointed Circuit Judge

January 21, 2016: Late Monday Afternoon Chief Judge Jorge L. Ortiz received word from Springfield that Associate Judge Christopher Stride had been appointed Circuit Judge in the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit by the Illinois Supreme Court. "Judge Stride, with over ten years of judicial experience, is an outstanding choice as Circuit Judge. His keen intellect, even temperament and industriousness will continue to serve him and the people of Lake County well," said Chief Judge Ortiz...

Circuit Judges Announce Retirement

January 8, 2016: Chief Judge Jorge L. Ortiz announced today that two circuit judges of the 19th Judicial Circuit have decided to retire from the bench and begin another chapter in their lives. Circuit Judge John T. Phillips, who just completed his second term as Chief Judge on January 3, 2016, and Circuit Judge George Bridges will both retire effective January 25th with each having served the County of Lake for over twenty years...

Lake County Court Strengthens Foreclosure Mediation Program

January 6, 2016: On January 4, amendments to the rules governing the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit Court of Lake County's Residential Mortgage Foreclosure Mediation Program will go into effect. Informed by comprehensive data collection and meticulous evaluation, the Court amended Rule 19 to increase participation, grant homeowners and mortgage lenders more time to complete and review paperwork, and otherwise eliminate barriers to entry into the Court's program...