



Colorado Justice: Celebrating 40 years of fair  
and impartial courts through merit selection

# news

Colorado Judicial Branch  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Colorado summit to address overrepresentation of minority youth in juvenile court to be held in Denver on April 11**

*Participation by Judicial and Executive Branch officials and community organizations*

DENVER, Colo., -- The Colorado Judicial Branch's Court Improvement Program, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, and Model Courts Projects of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Districts today announced that the "Colorado Summit on Disproportionate Representation: A Focus on Our Children" will be held in Denver on Wednesday, April 11, beginning at 7:30 a.m.

"The Colorado Model Courts and Court Improvement Program are going to challenge those working within the child welfare system and we are excited to be co-hosting this very important training," said National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Model Court Liaison Cynthia Carrasco. "National and local experts will be on hand to discuss the issue of over-representation of minority children in juvenile court cases and highlight best practices for addressing this issue."

Judges, judicial officers, court facilitators, guardians ad litem, county attorneys, respondent parents' counsel, service providers, Court Appointed Special Advocates and child welfare administrators from county departments of human services from around Colorado will be among the approximately 200 registered training participants.

"Conducting a statewide training to address the issue of disproportionate minority over-representation is an effective way to heighten the awareness of those professionals working within the child welfare system," Carrasco said. "Vital information that affects our children and families within the system needs to be shared with child welfare stakeholders; namely, the notable efforts currently underway in the Colorado Model Courts and across the nation."

“The communication and education of best practices statewide bolstered by the support and leadership of the Colorado Court Improvement Program should make Colorado a national model,” Carrasco added.

Speakers and panel members will include:

- Honorable Karen Ashby, Denver Juvenile Court
- Honorable Patricia Martin Bishop, Presiding Judge, Child Protection Division, Circuit Court of Cook County
- Honorable William Thorne, Utah Court of Appeals
- Karen Beye, Executive Director, Colorado Department of Human Services
- Honorable Katherine Delgado, 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial District
- Honorable Theresa Cisneros, 4<sup>th</sup> Judicial District
- Magistrate Regina Walter, 4<sup>th</sup> Judicial District
- Michelle Adams, J.D., Executive Director, Denver CASA
- Cathryn Potter, Ph.D., DU Graduate School of Social Work
- Hasan Davis, J.D., Director of Empowerment Solutions
- Dianne Van Voorhees, Esq., Smith & Jolly, LLC
- Deborah Ward-White, Director, Denver System of Care Initiative
- Guillermo Serna, Community Advocate & Citizen of Commerce City

Speakers will discuss the disproportionate representation of minorities in juvenile cases on a local and national level and provide examples of local efforts to respond to the issue in line with best practices. A panel discussion on local strategies and systems perspectives will cover strategies that have been successful, challenges that have been overcome and lay out long-term visions for successful efforts to address this issue.

The summit training will be held Wednesday, April 11, 2007 from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Denver Grand Hyatt at 1750 Welton Street in downtown Denver.

For more information contact Court Improvement Program Coordinator, Bill DeLisio at [bill.delisio@judicial.state.co.us](mailto:bill.delisio@judicial.state.co.us) or 303-837-3623.

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