



Colorado Justice: Celebrating 42 years of fair
and impartial courts through merit selection

news

Colorado Judicial Branch
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Juvenile and family court unit named *Outstanding Team* ***Twenty-first Judicial District team receives Colorado Judicial Branch award***

The *Outstanding Team* in the Colorado Judicial Branch is the Twenty-first Judicial District's (Mesa County) Dependency and Neglect Case Processing Team. Members of the team are Magistrate Jane Westbrook, Division Clerk Dee Green, Assistant Division Clerk Tina Hoffman, Assistant Division Clerk Betty Richer and Family Court Facilitator Diane Lucero. The Colorado Judicial Branch annually recognizes a handful of outstanding employees for exemplary work contributing to the high quality of services provided throughout the state's 22 judicial districts.

"For years this small group of dedicated employees has been instrumental in completely revamping how this district handles dependency and neglect cases," said District Judge Thomas M. Deister. "They have been quietly, persistently, and appropriately innovative in handling this highly specialized caseload. These team members are the people to whom we turn when we have any questions concerning this highly specialized area of the law. They are readily available, invariably pleasant and helpful, and extremely knowledgeable."

Among its accomplishments, the team developed and implemented a new case processing system specific to the needs of the court, piloted a training program designed to bring together court and human services staff members, held a stakeholder gathering for all parties involved in

the court, took on review and management responsibilities for the open case reports and transitioned the courtrooms from tape recorders to digital recorders.

“This D&N team has always worked well together, produced accurate, timely, and quality work, and has been extremely pleasant to work with,” said Twenty-first Judicial District Administrator Judy Vanderleest. “During this past year the team faced more challenges and changes than usual and throughout it all each member maintained a positive, can do attitude.”

The Colorado Judicial Branch includes the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals, as well as the state’s district and county trial courts. The branch is also home to the Department of Probation Services, which employs more than 1,100 people including 800 probation officers. The department’s officers are responsible for supervising approximately 7,600 juvenile offenders and 61,000 adult offenders. As of July 1, 2008, the Colorado Judicial Branch employed approximately 3,600 employees, which includes 304 justices, judges and magistrates. In fiscal year 2007, the latest for which full statistics are available, there were 551,197 cases filed statewide at the County Court level, 189,235 cases filed in District Court, 2,548 in the Court of Appeals and 1,534 in the Supreme Court. There were 1,220 cases filed in the water courts.