

# GLENDALE CITY COURT Annual Report 2015



*...well-trained staff who embrace city values, conduct work in a professional manner and create an environment that is safe and respectful of fellow employees and the public we serve.*



*Presiding Judge Elizabeth Finn*

## Message from the Presiding Judge

In the fictionalized world of court on television and the internet that most of us are exposed to, we typically see a judge, a prosecutor, a defense attorney and maybe a bailiff. We might see a jury and a host of witnesses such as police officers, victims and doctors. But what we rarely see are the essential employees behind the scenes of the courtrooms in real life whose diverse skills and expertise allow court operations to function smoothly and efficiently every day.

I am referring to the interpreters, security staff, collection representatives, supervisors, court assigned police officers, accountants, compliance specialist, management aide, secretary, training coordinator, project coordinator, IT systems analyst and the court administrator. And I am referring to the many types of clerks and lead clerks we depend so heavily upon to perform an endless variety of case management specialties. They are data entry clerks, protective order clerks, front counter clerks, courtroom operations clerks, records clerks, public phones clerks, and file room clerks.

The work performed by these public servants may not be as glamorous and exciting as court on TV, but their places are equally critical in the administration of justice. They make sure business is conducted fairly and impartially, according to Arizona Supreme Court Rules, Arizona Revised Statutes, Glendale City Code, new legislation, the U.S. Constitution and other legal authorities.

As our Court's vision statement reminds me, they are "well-trained staff who embrace city values, conduct work in a professional manner and create an environment that is safe and respectful of fellow employees and the public we serve."

I hold our staff members in very high regard for delivering superior customer service while striving to uphold the public's perception of integrity each day throughout the year. For their superb efforts, I dedicate this 2015 Glendale City Court Annual Report to our wonderful staff members. Their professional contributions are reflected in the statistics and projects cited in the following pages. Thank you for your interest.



Glendale City Court adjudicates criminal misdemeanors, City Code violations, traffic violations and certain juvenile offenses committed in the City of Glendale. In cases of domestic violence and harassment, the Court issues protective orders. The Court has the authority to issue search warrants for misdemeanors and felonies.

## 2015 Case Management

Statistical Trends for Fiscal Years 2013-2015

Annual Case Filings			
Case Type	FY 2015 ✓	FY 2014	FY2013
Criminal Traffic	3,734	3,570	3,937
Misdemeanors	7,070	6,529	6,872
Failure to Appear	814	723	711
Civil Traffic	19,859	20,067	22,891
Parking	3,492	4,030	1,950
Protective Orders	3,304	2,869	2,973
DUI	1,541	1,381	1,393
<b>Total Filings</b>	<b>38,273</b>	<b>37,788</b>	<b>39,334</b>

Hearings and Trials			
Case Type	FY 2015 ✓	FY 2014	FY2013
Protective Order Hearings	1,141	985	1,002
Civil Traffic Hearings	370	351	338
Trials (Jury and Non-Jury)	55	32	41

## 2015 Fiscal Highlights

- Through the **FARE Collection Program** (Fines, Fees and Restitution Enforcement), the Court recovered financial delinquencies totaling \$1,862,855 this year, an increase of over \$100,000 from 2014. FARE's automated statewide collections enforcement efforts are administered by the Arizona Supreme Court to target defendants in arrears on court financial obligations.
- The Court's **Tax Intercept Program** (TIP) collected \$181,235 in 2015. This automated program operated by the Arizona Supreme Court allows the Court to collect state income tax refunds and lottery winnings for overdue Court payments.
- **Home detention with electronic monitoring** continues to provide substantial cost savings for the Glendale Police Department's prisoner maintenance budget. During 2015, a total of 4,940 days of electronic monitoring in lieu of incarceration were ordered by Glendale Judges and served by 342 defendants. Had all these days been spent in jail, more than \$413,000 would have been incurred in additional jail costs. All defendants are carefully screened to eliminate violent offenders.

Fiscal Trends			
	CY 2015 ✓	CY 2014	CY 2013
FARE Collections	\$1,862,855	\$1,760,165	\$1,418,594
TIP Collections	\$181,235	\$189,906	\$214,673
Home Detention Savings	\$413,000	\$420,000	\$288,167

## Training and Professional Development

### Supreme Court Educational Compliance

During 2015, Glendale City Court’s staff and judges achieved 100% compliance to the Arizona Supreme Court’s annual education standards mandated by the Administrative Office of the Courts. All full-time judges and court personnel must complete at least 16 credit hours of judicial education each year, including ethics training and computer network security. Judges must also attend a three-day judicial training conference sponsored by the Supreme Court. This year, Training Coordinator Marcia Bradley accredited 56 educational courses, including local on-site classes, webinars, satellite broadcasts, e-learning opportunities and independent learning modules. On-site classes save time, travel and other expenses for education activities.

Glendale’s judges also attended the two-day annual training conference hosted by the Arizona Governor’s Office of Highway Safety December 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. Judge Finn and Court Administrator Chris Phelps attended the invite-only Arizona Supreme Court 2015 Court Leadership Conference on October 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. Topics included Civil Justice Reform, Court Interpreter Credentialing and Case Time Standards.

### Glendale Domestic Violence Training Conference

Glendale City Court teamed with the Glendale Police Department, the Arizona Supreme Court’s Education Services Division and the Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence in September to organize a large-scale domestic violence training event. The 2015 Glendale Domestic Violence Training Conference attracted more than 200 attendees to the Glendale Regional Public Safety Training



Center. The two-day gathering of professionals from throughout Arizona and beyond provided an educational forum for judges, prosecutors, law enforcement personnel, advocates, non-profit agencies, treatment providers, probation officers, court staff and others who respond to domestic violence and its effects in our communities. Keynote speaker Casey Gwinn, President of Alliance for HOPE International spoke on “Working Together to Change the World of Survivors and Their Children.” Some of the 19 continuing education topics included The Impact of Childhood Trauma on Children and Adults, The Parallels of Sex Trafficking and Domestic Violence, Lethality Assessment, Witness Tampering, Working with Gender and Sexual Minorities and Campus Sexual Assault.

*Above: Faculty teaching at the 2015 Glendale Domestic Violence Training Conference included Marc Tetzlaff, Victim Assistance Specialist for the ICE Homeland Security Investigations Office for Arizona; Members of the Maricopa County Attorney’s Office and Glendale City Court Presiding Judge Elizabeth Finn.*



## Specialized Problem-Solving Courts

As **Mental Health Court** enters its fourth year of operations in 2016, nearly 350 participants have been referred to the program, and 135 graduates have successfully completed all requirements to earn diversion of their criminal cases. In partnership with the City Prosecutor’s Office, a public defender and local behavioral health experts from Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care, the program’s goal is to maintain psychiatric stability of mentally ill defendants. This reduces recidivism, jail costs and expensive court-ordered mental health evaluations. Mental Health Court provides judicial supervision to see that defendants follow their case manager’s treatment plans, take medication as prescribed and attend required programs, such as substance abuse counseling. Judge Finn served on Supreme Court committees which mandated new standards for Arizona mental health courts. The Supreme Court contracted with the National Center for State Courts to establish benchmarks for monitoring performance and conducting evaluations, which promote the accountability of mental health courts and their participants. Glendale City Court is currently working with Mercy Maricopa and other Mental Health Court partners to comply with all Supreme Court mandated standards. A pair of Mental Health Court news stories can be found on Glendale City Court’s *You Tube* playlist at:

[http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLh2qy1UEBrT\\_szUEJrzbyEd2W7lspPEgb](http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLh2qy1UEBrT_szUEJrzbyEd2W7lspPEgb)

Since 2004, all persons convicted of domestic violence crimes have been required to attend Glendale’s **Domestic Violence Treatment Court** program. Treatment Court follows a problem-solving approach similar to Mental Health Court, monitoring about 360 domestic violence offenders each month. By law, a convicted domestic violence offender must complete a minimum of 26 weeks of counseling. Since program inception, almost 3,000 defendants completed all Treatment Court program requirements for graduation.

*Glendale City Court’s  
Domestic Violence  
Treatment Court is a past  
recipient of the Arizona  
Supreme Court’s annual  
“Justice for a Better Arizona”  
Achievement Award.*

The Maricopa County Adult Probation Department provides felony-level supervision of Glendale City Court’s misdemeanor domestic violence offenders having at least one prior conviction. During the **Supervised Probation Review Docket** a probation officer/surveillance officer team develops a monthly review calendar to verify adherence to court orders. Noncompliant defendants are ordered to perform community service and other sanctions.

City Court conducts twice-monthly DUI Sentence Review Calendars during a **DUI Review Docket** to monitor substance abuse counseling compliance status and progress of all defendants convicted of DUI. This specialized calendar provides judicial oversight to maintain defendant accountability through status checks of counseling attendance and other sentencing conditions.

## Connecting with the Community

### Standing Up For Veterans

Fifteen Court employees volunteered their services on a Saturday in September for the third annual “Stand Up For Veterans” community outreach event at Glendale Community College. Court staff served as liaisons for triage to refer veterans to proper stations, running public access queries on court case histories, and tracking community service projects performed during the event. A total of 223 veterans received assistance on civil and criminal legal issues during Stand Up. Judge Finn heard 69 cases of veteran defendants and issued 25 community service orders. This year’s community service project involved beautification of Sahuaro Ranch Park’s historic aviary. Seven additional community service orders aided the Blue Star Moms letter writing campaign for soldiers serving overseas. Representatives from ADOT’s Motor Vehicle Division provided customer service to veterans on licenses, titles, registration, disability plates, MVD records and identification cards. Maricopa County Public Defenders assisted veterans with free consultation on criminal cases, plus restoration of civil rights for felony convictions. The State Bar of Arizona’s Volunteer Lawyer program provided free legal advice on civil matters. Glendale City Court staff also helped resolve twenty cases for military veterans during the 2015 Maricopa County Stand Down, which was held at Veterans Memorial Coliseum February 14th through 16th. Stand Down is the largest outreach event for homeless veterans in the country.



### Law Day

Glendale City Court hosted its annual Law Day celebration on April 30<sup>th</sup>, as 50 students from Our Lady of Perpetual Help School learned about the justice system. This year’s theme was “The Magna Carta: Symbol of Freedom Under Law.” Law Day speakers included former City Prosecutor Rob Walecki, Public Defender Jennifer Dalton, Glendale Police Sergeant Brent Coombs and Judge Finn. Law Day is designed to celebrate the rule of law in America and educate citizens about the role of the judiciary in their communities. City Councilmember Jamie Aldama is shown here greeting students in the jury box.



### Adult Probation Satellite Office

The Maricopa County Adult Probation Department is now conducting field satellite office duties to meet probationers at Glendale City Court each Tuesday. The Juvenile Probation Department also performs similar duties at Glendale City Court, utilizing space in the court’s lobby to meet with clients on Thursdays. Adult and juvenile probation satellite offices provide a community presence and customer service element for probationers in Glendale.

## Court Technology

The Court's Systems Analyst David Garretson has deployed an automated outbound communications program to contact defendants via autodial, text, and email options. The software program known as *Ansible 2.0* alerts defendants of pending court dates, missed court dates, payments due and missed payments. Messages are delivered in English and Spanish. *Ansible 2.0* is expected to help increase court collections and lower failures to appear in court.

Customers who use Visa, MasterCard, American Express and other credit and debit cards to pay court costs are now much safer conducting business at Glendale City Court. As an added safeguard against fraud, all service windows at the Court's front counter have been equipped with payment terminals capable of reading cards embedded with EMV security chips.

Large video display monitors are being installed in the court lobby with daily calendaring information to direct parties to their correct courtroom location, much like the monitors in airport terminals with arrival/departure information. The monitors will probably be functional in early-2016. Eventually, the Court's display system will accommodate check-in with bar codes to allow defendants and jurors to report quickly and easily to their proper courtrooms.

## Defendant Psychiatric Evaluations

The Arizona Judicial Council and the Arizona Supreme Court have authorized Glendale City Court to serve as a pilot location for City judges (as opposed to Superior Court judges) to rule on Rule 11 mental competency evaluations of misdemeanor defendants. This distinction follows Judge Finn's formal presentations in October on the benefits of holding such proceedings on-site at local courts. Psychiatrists will meet with defendants at the courthouse instead of their clinics and offices. This should reduce the number of defendants who fail to appear for psychiatric appointments, thus also reducing the subsequent costs billed to the Court for failures to appear. Other benefits include reduced jail and court resources and more rapid restoration to psychiatric stability. Two Glendale judges have been appointed as Maricopa County Superior Court judges pro tempore to preside over Rule 11 proceedings, and two staff have been appointed as Deputy Clerks of Maricopa County Superior Court. Glendale City Court staff and judges will be incorporating many new processes into court business operations in the coming year to accommodate this pilot project.



## Accolades

Judge Finn was inducted into the Maricopa County Bar Association's Hall of Fame during its Annual Meeting Luncheon in October. Having served as a judge for 36 years, she is Arizona's most senior judge. Judge Finn was also appointed by Arizona Supreme Court Chief Justice Scott Bales to the Supreme Court Committee on Limited Jurisdiction Courts.

# Interesting Court Facts

## Did you know???

Security guards screened 99,260 visitors entering the court building in 2015 and confiscated 4,550 prohibited items such as pocket knives, box cutters and spray canisters.

For the twelfth consecutive year, Judge Finn served as faculty for Glendale University in April. She taught student citizens about domestic violence and DUI case law, as well as overall court operations and programs.

Glendale City Court conducts business seven days per week, 365 days per year. Even on weekends and holidays, all accused persons are required by Supreme Court Rules to an initial appearance before a judge within 24 hours to be advised of the nature of their charges and have release status reviewed. Clerks and judges who work during daily Jail Court proceedings make sure these rights are honored.

Nearly half of Glendale City Court employees (21) have been working for the City of Glendale for more than 10 years. This includes a 25-year employee, two 20-year employees and eight 15-year employees.

In addition to providing live Spanish language interpretation during all business hours, Glendale City Court offered interpretation of 34 lesser-known languages for 355 calendared court proceedings during FY 2015, either in-person or via an instant telephonic language line. Some of these less common languages are Dinka, Malay, Tagalog, Fula, Tigrinya and Chaldean. Can you name any of the countries or regions where these languages are predominantly spoken? See the answers below.

During the last quarter of 2015, Glendale City Court surpassed the Arizona Supreme Court's case processing time standards for civil traffic cases. While all courts are required to conclude 80% of these cases within 60 days, Glendale achieved a rate of 86.5%. Meanwhile, Glendale processed 94.85% of these cases within 90 days, which is slightly less than the Supreme Court standard of 95%. Court staff will continue its ongoing dialogue with Glendale in 2016 to establish compliance with DUI time standards.



*Answers: South Sudan (Dinka), Malaysia (Malay), Philippines (Tagalog), West and Central Africa (Fula), Ethiopia (Tigrinya), Iran and Iraq (Chaldean)*

*Pictured above: CBI Security staff George Mirabile, Ronnie Rainey and Larry Coleman*