

**Remarks by Hon. Audrey K. Skwierawski**  
**Director of State Courts**  
**Annual Meeting of the Wisconsin Judicial Conference**  
November 13, 2024

Thank you Chief Justice Ziegler,

Welcome esteemed members of Wisconsin’s judiciary – Justices, Judges, Court Commissioners, Municipal Judges, Reserve and Emeritus Judges. It is an honor to gather with you all at this year’s annual Judicial Conference. I bring greetings from the entire Director of State Courts Office, along with deep gratitude for your collective commitment to our third branch of government. Your selfless contributions to our justice system are too many to count and do not come without sacrifice. Thank you for all you do.

We have many new judges, who stood up just a few moments ago! To you, we extend a special greeting. You join a group of public servants who work with an unparalleled commitment to delivering justice, and who do it in a way that makes real the promises of our government in the lives of each person who walks through the courthouse doors.

As the Director of State Courts I am fortunate to act as an ambassador for you and our court system when I speak to stakeholders at conferences and gatherings around the state. At each event, I begin with a recitation of our shared mission:

**To protect individual's rights, privileges and liberties, to maintain the rule of law, and to provide a forum for the resolution of disputes that is fair, accessible, independent and effective.**

Our theme for this year’s conference, “Access to Justice,” is not just a theme, but one of those foundational goals explicit in this mission – providing a forum that is accessible.

We are excited to feature presentations on a wide variety of topics related to improving access to justice across our courts. I would like to thank the planning committee, its co-chairs Judge Jennifer Dorow and Judge Ashley Morse, our presenters, and the Office of Judicial Education for the hard work put in to make this conference a success. I would also like to extend a special thank you to our Capitol Police Liaison Sergeant Tammy Johnson and the Sheboygan County Sheriff’s Department for their assistance.

Our hope is that the conference will provide you with new information and tools to help you enhance access to justice when you return to your home courthouse.

Our goal in the Director of State Courts Office is to support you as you undertake this critically important work. We couldn’t do that without a group of people who care deeply about the

work they do. You are supported by a talented and dedicated system that is organized across seven separate offices.

The **Office of Court Operations** provides technical assistance to the circuit courts, often through the district court administrators, in areas such as records management, caseload management, personnel and staffing (including assignment of reserve judges), policy analysis, and business intelligence, long-range planning, and interpreter training and certification. Court Operations also provides staff support for committees, performs research on court management, and completes special projects for the Director of State Courts Office. **Holly Szablewski**, is the Deputy Director of State Courts Office of Court Operations.

The **Office of Management Services** oversees the administrative backbone of the Wisconsin Court System, handling essential functions like the budget, human resources, payroll and benefits, leave accounting, purchasing, risk management, space allocation, and facility management. **Caitlin Frederick** is the Deputy Director of State Courts Office of Management Services.

The **Consolidated Court Automation Programs (CCAP)** provide information technology and telecommunications services to the Wisconsin Court System. For over three decades, CCAP has helped Wisconsin courts use technology to improve court operations, expand services to litigants, increase operational efficiencies, and accommodate information sharing throughout the justice system. **Tom Flitter** is the Chief Information Officer.

As the name suggests, the **Office of Judicial Education** conducts seminars and training activities to equip Wisconsin's judges with the tools and resources to navigate today's legal landscape. **Morgan Young** is the Director of the Office of Judicial Education.

The **Children's Court Improvement Program** works to improve the handling of child abuse and neglect, termination of parental rights, and adoption cases in the court system through educational programming and integration of best practices. **Bridget Mauerman** is the Director of the Children's Court Improvement Program.

The **Wisconsin State Law Library** was founded to serve the legal information needs of state employees, attorneys, and the public in Wisconsin. It continues to facilitate equal access to the law by serving as a vital resource of legal information, materials, and technology. **Amy Crowder** is the State Law Librarian.

**Medical Mediation Panels** provide an objective assessment of medical malpractice claims before they can proceed to court. **Randy Sproule** is the Director of Medical Mediation Panels.

The **Office of Lawyer Regulation** handles grievances relating to lawyer misconduct, conducts

investigations, and prosecutes violations of lawyer ethics rules. **Tim Samuelson** is the Director of the Office of Lawyer Regulation.

The **Board of Bar Examiners** evaluates the skills, character, and fitness of lawyers. It also writes and grades the Wisconsin Bar Exam, and monitors lawyers' compliance with rules for continuing legal education. **Jacquelynn Rothstein** is the Director of the Board of Bar Examiners.

Several members of our team have retired since the last conference, and we'd like to recognize them for their years of service and wish them well in their life's next chapter.

**Laurie Nelson**, whom many of you know from her role in coordinating our conferences, has retired after 18 years of state service.

**Chris Paulsen** retired as Chief Deputy Clerk of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals after 20 years of service.

Please join me in thanking **Patrick Brummond** who retired from the District Court Administrator position in District Seven after 30 years of service.

I'd also like to thank **Susan Byrnes** who also served as a District Court Administrator in District Nine, and retired after 19 years of service.

Laurie, Chris, Pat, and Susan may have retired, but there are plenty of other amazing team members who remain. If I could ask everyone who works in the Director of State Court Office to stand. These dedicated people are here to help. Many of us will be here for the entirety of the conference. We look forward to connecting with you, so please do stop by and say hello.

As we come together over the next few days to exchange ideas and learn about new ways to improve access to justice, let's remain committed to our shared mission. I look forward to the meaningful conversations and insights we'll share. Thank you all for your unwavering commitment to Wisconsin's courts, and we all hope you have a great conference!

