



Public Information Office
United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

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NEWS RELEASE

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National Recognition for Court Staff from Nevada, Southern California

SAN FRANCISCO – Court staff from Nevada and Southern California have received national recognition for their work in developing an electronic voucher processing system that is transforming how the federal judiciary manages spending for indigent defense.

The eVoucher System, which grew out of a program developed by the United States District Court for the District of Nevada and is now being implemented by federal courts nationwide, was selected for a Director’s Award for Excellence in Court Operations by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

Recognized for their work in developing and implementing the system were District Clerk Lance Wilson, Chief Deputy Clerk Cindy Jensen, Special Projects Director Vicente Angotti and programmers Thomas Pyle and Guillermo Rojas of the Nevada district court in Las Vegas, and programmer Vaidehi Prabhakaran of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California in San Diego.

Legal representation of indigent defendants facing criminal charges in federal courts is required under the Sixth Amendment of the Constitution and the Criminal Justice Act. CJA funding is allocated to the federal judiciary each year for this purpose and courts are responsible for managing use of these funds, which pay for legal counsel and other services necessary for adequate representation.

Before eVoucher, courts relied on a “hard copy” system that was slow, susceptible to mathematical and other errors, and labor intensive. By automating much of the process, the

eVoucher System simplifies the submission of vouchers by attorneys and service providers and the review of vouchers by judges and court staff. Reimbursement rates are built into electronic forms, removing almost all mathematical errors and significantly reducing the amount of time needed for staff review. Vouchers are immediately available for review by judges, facilitating quicker processing of vouchers and payments to attorneys and service providers.

The eVoucher System also provides much improved data retrieval and analysis functions. As the database of information builds over time, trial judges will be better able to evaluate specific vouchers and the overall cost of a representation.

“The eVoucher System will have substantial long-term benefits to the judiciary. I am very pleased that the managers and staff who worked so diligently on it are being recognized,” said Chief Judge Sidney R. Thomas of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

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