



December 5, 2001

An internal newsletter published monthly by The National Center Communications Office

NCSC Today

The National Center for State Courts

National Center Turns 30

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR STATE COURTS

THREE DECADES OF IMPROVING JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

Dates to remember

Hanukkah	12/10
Christmas Day	12/25
Kwanzaa Begins	12/26

What's inside?

- * Catch up with the work of The National Center
- * Upcoming events
- * Words to watch out for

A few years after establishing The National Center for State Courts, Chief Justice Warren Burger called The National Center "the most important development in judicial reform since the turn of the century."

That sentiment was felt last month as The National Center celebrated its 30th anniversary in a series of events in Washington, D.C. The events revolved around the annual William H. Rehnquist Award for Judicial Excellence, which was held November 15 at the Great Hall of the Supreme Court and attended by more than 200. The Honorable Thelma Wyatt Cummings Moore, judge of the Superior Court of Fulton

County, Ga., was this year's recipient.

The anniversary events, however, kicked off on the afternoon of November 15 with a National Press Club luncheon that featured Alan Page, associate justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court. In the nationally broadcast speech, Justice Page spoke about reforms needed in the judicial selection system—one of The National Center's key initiatives. He also made several references to The National Center's work and how it affects the state courts. Roger Warren sat at the National Press Club's head table, and lunch guests included The National

Center's board of directors, the boards of the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators, and several other leaders in the justice system.

Friday's events started with a Justice Roundtable discussion between judges and attorneys on judicial selection. The Roundtable was followed by The National Center's Annual Recognition Luncheon, which was held at the Willard Intercontinental Hotel.

"There is no other institution that has a greater impact on the na-

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Right on the Money in Nigeria

The National Center established an office in Abuja, the capital of Nigeria in November 2000. Staff of the International Programs Division, particularly David Andersen, Robert Becker, and Heike Gramckow, supported by consultants and local staff,

have been working diligently to assist the Nigerian judiciary in their efforts to build a more reliable and democratic judicial system.

As in the U.S., resolving budget issues and gaining sufficient financial support for the courts are im-

portant topics.

Sufficient finances essential to developing a well-functioning court system, and fighting corruption is very difficult when judges and court staff are underpaid and the court has to rely on the parties to provide for transcripts.

National Center consultants Kate Harrison and Lesley Duncan conducted budget development training in Nigeria, and Karen Heroy, supported by Kate Harrison and legislature expert consultant Claus Gram-

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Words to Watch Out For



To Each His Own

Yes, I do requests, even if they aren't the "platters that matter." This one comes from our Arlington Office: "Any chance you might cover this topic—'each other' versus 'one another'—in a future *NCSC Today* issue? Or is the proper use of this option so evident to native speakers that it's not worth writing about?"

I've never given this matter much thought, but others have. There is some controversy over

when to use *each other* and *one another*, and like many controversies in our language (such as the "never end a sentence with a preposition" rule), the matter hasn't been entirely settled. Strict grammarians believe that *each other* should refer to no more than two, while *one another* refers to three or more. For example (hypothetical): "The controversy between the two states in-

olved each other's water rights." If you were referring to more than two states, this would read "one another's water rights."

Personally, I have no strong feelings on this matter, and writers often ignore it. But if you stick to the rule, at least you can't be second—especially by those grammatical bluenoses who haunt the Newport News *Daily Press's* "Feedback" column. Beware a strict grammarian who uses e-mail.

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Right on the Money in Nigeria, cont.

ckow, arranged study tours for judges, budget officers, legislators, and their counterparts in the executive branch to learn about judicial budget processes at the state (Maryland) and federal levels in the U.S. The hands-on, targeted information provided by National Center staff and consultants, the learning experience in the U.S., and the leadership of the Nigerian judiciary have had results much more quickly than expected.

Significant improvements in presentation and justification of judicial budgets were reported, with one of the participants of the budget training receiving special commen-

dations for having developed the best budget among all the states.

A representative of the legislature, Peter Ntephe, stated that as a result of participating in the budget officers study tour, and in cooperation with Mrs. Abdulmalik, secretary of the National Judicial Council, the budget request and approval process was streamlined, leading to a decrease in time required for this process from two weeks to forty-eight hours through the use of standardized procedures.

Participants of the legislative study group commented on increased communication between

the judiciary, executive, and legislature, as well as a change in presenting the budget to the legislature. In addition to submitting the budget, as required, to the Ministry of Finance, the judicial budget was submitted simultaneously to the legislature.

The fact that the judicial budget increased from 10 billion naira to 22 billion naira is a significant accomplishment that is likely a result of the support the Nigerian decision makers received from The National Center. Further, a total budget of 5 billion naira has been allocated for capital expenditures for the courts, of which 2 billion have been allocated for this year.

The National Center Turns 30, cont.

tion's courts or does more to ensure the fair and effective administration of justice," Chief Judge Annice Wagner, president of The National Center's board of directors, said at the luncheon. The luncheon honored individuals and companies that have made tremendous contributions to The National Center, and this year marked the 50th inductee to the Warren Burger Society.

The anniversary events came to a memorable end the evening of November 16 with the 30th Anniversary Program and Reception. Timothy E.

Flanigan, deputy counsel to President George W. Bush and former law clerk for Chief Justice Burger, addressed the crowd and discussed Chief Justice Burger's life, about which Flanigan is writing a biography.

Several past and present National Center board members took some 75 reception guests on a walk down memory lane, recapping The National Center's early days.

NCSC Today

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