



THE NATIONAL  
JUDICIAL COLLEGE

# Annual Report

## 2015

### **Making the Case for Giving to *The NJC Experience***

More than 4,100 judicial officers took in-person courses at the NJC and around the country in 2015. Another 3,400 judges and other court service professionals took programs online. We provided 472 judges and judicial personnel with \$444,836 in scholarships to attend NJC courses, with a significant amount of that funding coming from individual and corporate donors.

Against the backdrop of historically high enrollments and increased need for scholarships, the College recently produced a Case for Support video.

We are grateful for each and every gift donated to the College and encourage you to watch our new video to learn about the NJC's

accessibility: courses offered in Reno, around the country and online; courses led by sitting or retired judges from around the country and from every jurisdiction; and a comprehensive curriculum that offers educational opportunities for virtually every type of judge — at every stage of his or her career — on a wide variety of topics.

But perhaps one of the most significant benefits of *The NJC Experience* is the collegiality.

Peer-to-peer interaction is a hallmark of an NJC education. Our faculty are a resource that students will tap for years after they leave the course. And the networking that takes place is invaluable.

*The NJC Experience* — accessibility, veteran faculty, relevant courses, and collegiality — is why 98 percent of judges who take an NJC course say they would welcome taking future courses. However, of that total, 75 percent identified a lack of funding as the primary obstacle to pursuing continuing education.

Our board chair Matt Sweeney put it best: "Well-educated judges are essential to a strong court system, which fairly and promptly resolves the disputes that come before it. Your contributions to the College will help us satisfy that mission through programs and scholarships. Please be generous. Your donations to the College will make a difference."

Please visit [www.judges.org/giving](http://www.judges.org/giving) today to see the video.

HON. CHAD SCHMUCKER  
*President*





# NJC Programs

The NJC educates the nation's judges through a variety of modalities supported by various funding sources. Regardless of the delivery vehicle or financial resource, every program contributes to the College's central mission of *education – innovation – advancing justice* in courtrooms across the country.

## 1. Tuition-based courses held at the NJC on the University of Nevada, Reno Campus

Judges who came to the NJC in 2015 took part in 39 residential courses ranging from one to two weeks.

This figure includes courses offered through the NJC's National Tribal Judicial Center. The NJC prides itself on educating its faculty on state-of-the-art adult learning principles and practices. Because of this background and education, the NJC's diverse and experienced faculty are able to assist judicial participants in improving their core competencies through course content that the NJC evaluates and refreshes with the latest information.

The teaching emphasis on "learning by doing" and providing opportunities for judges to interact with their peers from around the country are key ingredients of *The NJC Experience*. This immersive approach enables judges to immediately use the new information when they return to their jurisdictions. *The NJC Experience* includes the College's setting: the University of Nevada, Reno. Nevada is ranked as a national Tier 1 University by *U.S. News and World Report*. It is a distinction earned based upon the quality of students, faculty, research

activity, and degree programs. The campus features museums, a world-class library, a picturesque century-old oak-lined quadrangle, and ivy-covered buildings, including the historic Morrill Hall, built in 1886.

## 2. Courses Across the Country

The NJC offers many tuition-based courses in destinations around the country to satisfy the needs of more experienced judges who request specific academic subjects. The College makes it a practice to hold these enriching classes in locations that offer attractions for judges to enjoy in the off-hours. In 2015, the NJC conducted nine courses:

- » **Complex Commercial Litigation**  
*Miami, FL*
- » **Logic and Opinion Writing**  
*San Diego, CA*
- » **Essential Skills for Appellate Judges**  
*San Diego, CA*
- » **Evidence in a Courtroom Setting**  
*Napa, CA*
- » **Current Issues in the Law**  
*Seattle, WA*



# 11,482

The total number of instructional hours the NJC provided to new judges in 2015.

# 51%

The percentage of the NJC's learners who are state judges. The remaining 49% of the College's participants are administrative law, limited jurisdiction, tribal, and military judges, as well as court service professionals.

» ***When Justice Fails: Threats to the Independent Judiciary***

*Washington, DC*

» ***Advanced Evidence***

*Big Sky, MT*

» ***Enhancing Judicial Bench Skills***

*Santa Fe, NM*

» ***Handling Capital Cases***

*New Orleans, LA*

These courses also carry the elements of *The NJC Experience*: Experienced faculty, a learning-by-doing approach, and peer-to-peer interaction. And, as with the Reno-based classes, many seminars also provide credit toward the NJC's certificate programs and Judicial Studies degree program.

### 3. Tuition-based web courses

The NJC was one of the first judicial education organizations to educate judges using distance learning beginning in 1999. Today, the College's six-week Blackboard programs feature weekly web conferences via WebEx, quizzes, video clips, readings, simulations, rich discussions among the participants and faculty, and exercises — including the drafting of an opening statement for judges when they begin court — among many others. Each faculty-led program lasts six weeks and is taught by a team of three to six judges who are subject matter experts in the topics presented. In 2015, the College's web courses included:

## 2015 NJC Enrollment at-a-Glance

|   | COURSES    | ATTENDEES    |
|---|------------|--------------|
| Tuition-Based Courses (In-Person, Off-Site, Tribal, Web)        | 45         | 1,120        |
| Custom-Designed Courses   | 32         | 1,808        |
| Federal Grant Initiatives                                       | 14         | 586          |
| Collaborations and Private Grant Initiatives                    | 16         | 603          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>107</b> | <b>4,117</b> |
| <b>Live/Recorded Webcasts, Online Self-Study Courses (est.)</b> |            | <b>3,422</b> |

» ***Evidence Challenges for Administrative Law Judges***

» ***Ethics and Judging: Reaching Higher Ground***

» ***Ethics for the Administrative Law Judge***

» ***Handling Small Claims Effectively***

» ***Selected Criminal Evidence Issues***

» ***Special Considerations for the Rural Court Judge***

### 4. Custom-designed programs

For some agencies or courts, it makes financial sense to contract with the NJC to deliver a course in the agency's or court's state. To ensure a successful program, the NJC conducts a needs assessment and presents a custom-designed program at a location and date that is convenient for the contracting party. Contracting entities include federal and state administrative law agencies, court systems and judicial education organizations, among others. For instance, the Arkansas Administrative Office of the Courts annually funds a course for its limited jurisdiction judges focusing on traffic issues. In the administrative law context, the District of Columbia Department of

# \$1.4 million

On average, the amount the College's 250 volunteer faculty members donate in teaching time annually.



Employment Security contracted with the College to present a course on unemployment adjudication. In short, if the participants can't come to the NJC, the NJC can come to them.

## 5. Federal grant programs and projects

The NJC is a leading resource for government agencies seeking assistance with judicial-related projects and programs. The NJC presents an average of 20-30 federal grant programs annually. Federally funded grant projects cover a wide range of subjects, including capital litigation improvement, caseload management, sentencing sex offenders initiatives and human trafficking. A partial list of federal agency funders include the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance; the State Justice Institute; the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking; the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

## 6. Collaborations and private grant projects

These projects are mainly collaborative programs with other entities such as the International Association for the Advancement of the American Legal System, the Center for Court Innovation, the National Center for Justice and the Rule of Law, the Center for Health

& Justice at TASC (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities) in Illinois, the Pretrial Justice Institute, and private funding sources such as foundations and charitable trusts. International programs are sometimes included in this category and sometimes funded by federal grants.

## 7. Internet-based education

Beyond its tuition-based web courses, the NJC offers other kinds of web-based tools to meet the needs of judges who may not otherwise have access to judicial education programming. For example, the College offers a series of 60- to 90-minute live webcasts on a variety of topics. Examples include:

- » ***Notable Decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court***
- » ***Understanding Co-occurring Mental Health and Substance Abuse Disorders***
- » ***Mediator as Leader***
- » ***Procedural Fairness and Case Management***

Also popular are the self-study recorded programs, including *Taking the Bench: An Online Program for New Judges*, and a series of traffic-themed webcasts.



AT THE NATIONAL JUDICIAL COLLEGE

Since the beginning of The National Judicial College, tribal judges have attended the NJC's courses, but in 1992 the College began offering courses specifically for the tribal judiciary. The NJC wanted to establish a separate center that focused solely on tribal justice, and so, in 2002 the NJC founded **The National Tribal Judicial Center** (NTJC). The Center is the result of meetings which took place between the NJC's staff and tribal judges and leaders to define the best way to meet the tribal judiciary's educational needs. Funding to support the NTJC came from a U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance grant.