



The Gavel

Newsletter

Edition 2025-03

Summer is almost over! Many of us have or will be taking our annual vacations during these warmer days and enjoying some much-needed rest and relaxation! Some of us spent a great week in Albuquerque, New Mexico for the 44th Annual Conference! Wow! What a great group of presenters and an exciting outing! If you missed this conference, you missed a lot! Please be sure to plan on attending next year so you won't miss one thing!



This summer has brought crazy weather and severe destruction to parts of our country. If you or a loved one has been affected by any of the severe weather outbreaks, please reach out to us. Our membership is here for you.

44th ANNUAL CONFERENCE!

Our 2025 Education Conference was held in Albuquerque, NM July 6th through the 10th. I believe the conference was a great success. We had right around 30 attendees, and I heard from most that a good time was had by all. We had 15 Judges from NM which I am very pleased with. We were able to sign up at least one Judge during the conference and I received commitment from others that they will be joining our organization.



I received compliments on the education. We offered a variety of topics that mainly focused on how to handle defendants, attorneys and other court participants. Our presenters came from all over. It started with a panel led by NM State Supreme Court Chief Justice David Thomson. We also had several presenters from our local state system and university, as well as from our own NJA Members.

The NJA Foundation auction was held on Tuesday night. We had many items donated and the auction was a great success, raising over \$2,600.00 for The Foundation. All those who attended were very generous.



Our field trip started with an exciting ride on the Sandia Tram. The Tram took us to the top of the beautiful Sadia Mountains at an elevation of 10,300 feet above sea level and overlooking Albuquerque. This was followed by a trip to Albuquerque Old Town where we experienced New Mexican cuisine and a self-guided tour of the historic area. We ended the day at the Bio-Park and Aquarium. It was a very hot day, but fun was had by all.

The conference was closed with a nice banquet. After dinner a plaque was awarded to Retired Hon. Gail Beckham in appreciation for her dedicated service as past President from 2022 to 2023. A plaque was also presented to Hon. Carlton Gray for his service as President from 2023 to 2025. Newly elected members of the Executive Board were sworn in By Hon. Kerry Burman our Executive Director. Also sworn in were our new State Representative's and their Alternates from various states.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the next conference.

Respectfully Submitted,
Hon. Carlton Gray
2025 Education Conference Chair



Hon. Gail Beckham, Ret.
NJ President
2022-2023



Hon. Carlton Gray
NJ President
2023-2025



NEWS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR!

It was nice to meet so many of you at our conference in New Mexico! The meals were absolutely fabulous, hotel was amazing, and our day out exploring was unbeatable! There are several photos from the conference on our website. Check them out! Some of our feedback from the conference include:

“The camaraderie of the group was phenomenal! I felt so welcomed! I truly enjoyed the field trip to the Tram, Old Town, and the Aquarium! Thank-you!!”

“Everything was very well planned. No Complaints.”

“I am very proud to be affiliated with this group.”

Please know that we do read all of the feedback and take your suggestions into consideration! If you have not yet completed the feedback survey, please do so as we are in the beginning stages of planning our next conference! Additionally, we would love to travel to new locations. Please let us know if you are interested in being a host in the future. We do have a committee that will assist with the planning, but need to have someone available to seek out hotels and outings!

Our members have voted to approve the changes to our By-Laws and our Council of State Representatives Policies. These changes help make our organization more valuable and current with the change of times. They are available to read on our website:

www.NationalJudgesAssociation.com

Please remember to email me your news to share with our membership! We want to know if you have been re-elected/appointed, new to the office, retired, etc!



I am so appreciative of this opportunity to serve as your Executive Director/Treasurer! I believe we have strength in numbers – and in each other. Whether you are a new judge or have been on the bench for years, we are here to support each other through advice, listening, or just being a good friend. I am thankful for all of you.

"A judge must apply the law as it is,
not as he wishes it to be."

- Raymond M. Kethledge

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES!

The National Judges Association Foundation offers scholarships to cover the registration fee to attend the Annual Conference. Please email Hon. Candace Hissong, Foundation Treasurer, for more information! Snicker28@gmail.com

As per our policies, we have awarded the Conference Participation Award to New Mexico! This award is given to the State Representative of the state that has the most registrants attending the conference. Congratulations to Collis Johnson who receives a registration conference for next conference!



AWARDS!

Kenneth L. MacEachern Award

This Award is the highest tribute given to a lay judge in the United States. It is named for Kenneth L. MacEachern, the founder, organizer and first Executive Director of the National Judges Association. Annually, the award committee, which consists of all previous recipients of this Award, select a judge who has been nominated by his/her peers as a jurist who has made an outstanding contribution to judicial education and the enhancement of the quality of justice.

To nominate a fellow non-attorney judge, please use the nomination form that will be coming in the next newsletter!

President's Award of Merit

Any member of NJA may nominate another individual who is not a Judge or an organization of Judges who has provided the NJA with support through funds, instruction year after year, for a secretary or clerk who has labored above and beyond that required to help with a conference, or any act that selfishly promotes the goals of NJA.

The written nomination should be sent to the Executive Director before March 1st. The Executive Committee will select the recipient, if any, for the award.



2024 MEETING MINUTES!

The following are the minutes of the 2024 General Membership Meeting and 2024 COSR Meeting that were approved at the meetings in New Mexico.

Minutes of General Membership Meeting Burlington, Vermont July 9, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 1:16 p.m. A quorum was declared by the President, the Hon. Carlton Gray.

The agenda was approved without corrections or additions. The motion to approve was made by the Hon. Penny McPherson (MT), the second made by the Hon. Derrick Dash (SC); motion carried. The minutes of the meeting held July 19, 2023 were discussed. The motion to approve without additions or corrections was made by the Hon. Derrick Dash (SC), seconded by the Hon. Lamont Barnett (VT) to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report was presented by the Hon. Kerry Burman, with a supplemental report from the Hon. Candace Hissong. A motion was made by the Hon. Lamont Barnett (VT), seconded by Hon. Penny McPherson (MT) to accept the report. Motion carried.

Officer's Reports

President Gray: A discussion was initiated to consider changing the requirement of the Executive Board to be composed of no more than one person from any given state in office. He wants to propose a change in the language in the bylaws to state "no more than two (2) per state and that the change be set for final consideration at the annual conference in 2025. The Hon. Lamont Barnett (VT) made a motion to place the issue on that agenda for publication and vote. The Hon. Bill Sutton (AZ) seconded that motion. The motion carried.

President Elect Hon. Mark Temaats (KS) -0- report

The office of Vice President is vacant.

Secretary Gwen Bampfield: was not present.

Executive Director: The Hon. Kerry Burman stated that her report is in the conference booklet.

Senior Director: -0- present

Other officers were either not present or the office (Historian) is vacant.

Standing Committee Reports

Membership, Finance, & Bylaws Committee(s): No report

Education: President Gray is chair and reported that the committee should be morphed into the Education & Conference Committee. The Hon. Carolyn Partridge and Hon. Bill Sutton volunteered

to serve, President Gray offered to remain on the committee and believes that it should automatically contain the previous year's conference chair for continuity and function. The Hon. Lamont Barnett asked if there is a restriction regarding one state-one members for committees. Hon. Candace Hissong replied that yes, for standing committees but not necessarily for ad hoc committees. Currently, Education is a standing committee; conference committee is an ad hoc committee.

Credentials, Resolutions, Legislative, Grants/Funds Committee(s): No report

Memorabilia Committee & Publicity Liaison Committee: The Hon. Candace Hissong summarized functions of these two positions.

Public Relations: The Hon. Bill Sutton serves in this capacity and gave an overview of his activities.

Conference 2024: The Hon. Lamont Barnett and the Hon. Carolyn Partridge were co-chairs. Judge Barnett expressed his appreciation to the Vermont membership who assisted his efforts. The Hon. Mary Frost was recognized for her fine work on the educational component of the conference, as well as the distinguished group of instructors. The Vermont judiciary and their staffs made great efforts to assure the success of the conference. The National Judges Association greatly appreciates this outstanding event. **Thank you to the Vermont Judges!**

Also discussed was the monthly Executive Board telephone conference call and adding participation and a retrospective on the education process. President Gray remarked that the value of the camaraderie and fellowship that takes place during the conference is valuable in and off itself, and greatly valued. Judge Partridge gave an overview of details for tomorrow's free day. Judge Barnett provided a statement regarding the role of the NJA in past advocacy, specifically for Vermont.

Elections

Judge Burman presented the Nomination Committee's recommended (motion) for the slate of officers.

President: Hon. Carlton Gray, President Elect, the Hon. Mark TEMAAT , Vice President, Hon. Lamont Barnett, Secretary Penny McPherson, Senior Director Bill Sutton. Hon. Mary Frost said to accept the Nomination Committee slate. The Hon. Derrick Dash, seconded by Hon. Collis Johnson (NM) moved to close nominations. Motion passed.

Therefore: The sequence of the decision:

Secretary: Hon. Penny McPherson was elected by acclamation. **Vice President:** Hon. Mary Frost seconded the nomination of Hon. Lamont Barnett. Judge Barnett nominated Hon. Derrick Dash, who declined. Judge Barnett was then elected. A vote of acclamation was called for Hon. Mark TEMAAT for **President Elect**. (Additional Motion by Judge Dash, seconded by Judge Johnson). He was elected.

Senior Director: Hon. Bill Sutton having been nominated, a second to that motion was made by Judge Barnett. Judge Gray will serve a second term. Elections were closed on a motion by Judge Dash, with a second by Judge Barnett. Motion carried.

Other concerns: Discussion included having a second signer on the corporate bank account. President Gray inquired as to having the Executive Board decide. Judge Barnett asked if it was a Montana Bank. The President could act in that capacity, as could another Montana member. Judge Dash made a motion to authorize the Executive Board to make the decision. The motion was seconded by Judge McPherson, and carried.

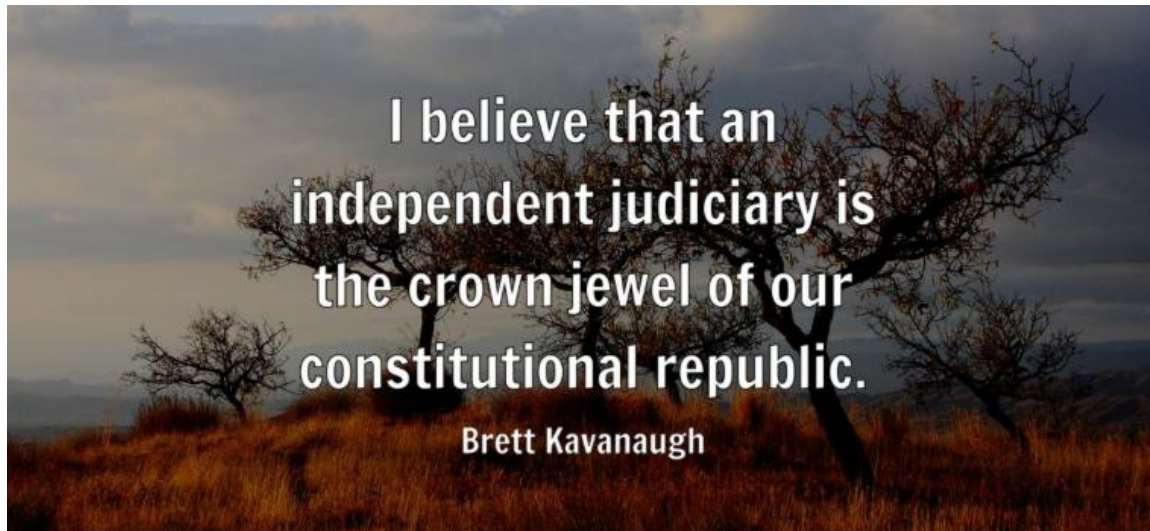
Next Meeting: The Council of State Representative Meeting location and date will be selected by President Gray, who suggested that it be done virtually, and moved to early next year. Meeting details will be shared soon.

Adjournment: 2:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Candace Hissong

At the request of the President



“So far today, God, I’ve done all right. I haven’t gossiped, I haven’t lost my temper, haven’t been grumpy, nasty, or selfish. I’m really thankful for that. But in a few minutes, I’m going to get out of bed. And from then on, I’m probably going to need a lot of help.”

NATIONAL JUDGES ASSOCIATION
Meeting of the Council of State Representatives
Burlington, Vermont
July 7, 2024

Present:

President: Hon. Carlton Gray (NM)	President Elect: Hon. Mark Temaat (KS)
Executive Director: Hon. Kerry Burman (MT)	
Hon. Lamont Barnett (VT)	Hon. Larry Blandings (SC)
Hon. Bill Conner (WY)	Hon. Derrick Dash (SC)
Hon. Candace Hissong (OR)	Hon. Collis Johnson (NM)
Hon. Bill Sutton (AZ)	

The meeting was called to order at 11:36 a.m. by President Gray. He inquired about a quorum. **A motion was made by Judge Conner to approve and recognize a quorum. Judge Sutton seconded the motion, which carried.** Judge Sutton gave the invocation. President Gray declared a quorum. The agenda was approved without changes or additions.

The minutes for the last Council meeting, held November 9, 2023 were reviewed. **Judge Barnett made a motion, seconded by Judge Johnson to approve the minutes as presented. The motion carried, with an abstention by Judge Conner.**

The Treasurer's Report was presented jointly by Judge Burman as current Executive Director and Judge Hissong as her predecessor, due to the issues of transition. Judge Burman outlined her report and new purchases; Judge Hissong presented her report for that portion of the fiscal year prior to the transfer of funds. Total current balance was discussed. (\$46,042.25) A second signer for the bank accounts was reviewed as well and will be addressed at the General Meeting by President Gray. Judge Burman will present the proposed budget at the fall council meeting. She requested an appointment to the Finance Committee.

Judge Gray announced that the fall meeting will be changed to a midyear (fiscally) date and will be done virtually. He also appointed Judge Burman to the Finance Committee, along with Judges Hissong and Conner. **Judge Sutton moved to approve the report which Judge Barnett then seconded; motion carried.**

Officer's Reports:

President's report: President Gray announced that he would like to revamp and consolidate some of the committees. For example, the Membership Committee could evolve into the Technical & Membership Committee. Action may be taken at the General Membership meeting on Tuesday. With regards to the Nominating Committee, Judge Gail Beckham, Senior Director isn't at the conference and she is responsible for chairing the committee. He appointed Judge Johnson to the

committee and Judge Burman as chair of that committee. The office of Vice President is vacant, and the board secretary is also absent from the conference.

President Gray also remarked that he wants to establish a “Conference Committee” which would oversee conference education, facilities and free day activities in an ongoing capacity and in assistance to hosting state. Judge Dash said that the hosting state needs to be represented on the committee. President Gray mentioned Judges Sutton and Hissong as having expertise at conference coordination. Judge Sutton also suggested that the Education and Conference committee be considered to be combined, and that he would serve on that committee

President Gray explained the genesis of the monthly executive board meetings and said that they work well and are going well; all are welcome to attend. If a person is interested, they should contact him and he will include them in notifications of meetings. Judge Barnett wondered about the requirement of not having more than one person from any state on the Executive Board; President Gray stated that he would like to amend the requirement language changed to say “no more than two” people from a given state; he will bring it up at the General Membership meeting on Tuesday. Judge Sutton said that it should be introduced as a proposed change, to be voted upon at the next annual conference, as required by the bylaws.

President Elect Report: Vice President Hon. Mark Temaat remarked that the Association is doing well with the Executive Director transition process. The monthly executive board meetings are also good policy.

Vice President Report: This office is vacant.

Secretary Report: Absent

Executive Director Report: Judge Burman offered her thanks to Judge Hissong for her assistance and tenure. Judge Burman is working on ideas for increasing membership. She announced that Council state representative elections to take place this conference are Kansas, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, New York, Oklahoma, South Carolina and Wyoming. The states need to caucus and let her know their choices.

Senior Director Report: Absent

Chaplain Report: Office Vacant

Sergeant at Arms Report: Absent

Parliamentarian Report: Absent

Historian Report: Office Vacant

Standing Committee Reports

Membership: (Chair absent) President Gray asked Judge Burman about current renewal numbers. She has heard from about seventy five members.

Finance: (Chair vacant) Judge Hissong remarked, as a member of the committee, that financial affairs were good.

Bylaws: (Chair absent) President Gray stated that the bylaws need to be reviewed to make sure they fit the need for encouragement of more activity by membership.

Education: President Gray spoke as chair; he commended Judge Barnett and Judge Carolyn Partridge and the Vermont judges who served on the conference committee. The education is well prepared and they've worked hard to provide first class judicial materials for us.

Resolutions: (Chair absent) No resolutions presented for consideration.

Legislative: (Chair Absent)

Grants & Funds: (Chair absent)

Memorabilia: Chair Judge Hissong explained this committee's function, but no other information was needed.

Publicity Liaison: Judge Hissong has provided this service to members who need a press release.

Public Relations: Judge Sutton summarized his availability to appear at state conferences as an NJA representative and instructor. Those who want more information are encouraged to contact him. He has appeared in the capacity of instructor for several events in Montana, Arizona and at our own conferences. President Gray added his remarks that NJA needs to support this in our budget; Judge Hissong pointed out that the support has been in a budget line item for years.

Lunch was provided at 12:25 pm. **President Gray made a motion to allow spouses to join us for lunch at no cost to them. Judge Dash seconded the motion, which carried.**

The meeting was called back into session at 1:17 p.m. by President Gray. He asked that we begin the State Representative Reports with the hosting state of Vermont.

Vermont: Judge Barnett said that except for the conference, things are quiet. He expressed his appreciation for the Hon. Mary Frost, Education Chair has worked with Hon. Carolyn Partridge in preparation for our event. Their legislature reviewed requirements for sheriffs and assistant judges to run for election. But no legislation was passed.

Wyoming: Judge Conner reported that judges of the largest cities (by population) are required to be law trained. Most are.

Arizona: Judge Sutton stated that their Superior Court is the court above the misdemeanor courts. All Superior Court judges are no longer running for election, but retention.

New Mexico: Judge Johnson told the council that HB 139 (eliminating fees) will affect the transient/homeless population. Judicial conference control has been shifted to the state. Judge Gray added that new judge training will be conducted virtually. He anticipates that soon all training at his level will be virtual as well which will eliminate their association. Elimination of the fees to which Judge Johnson referred will result in an unforeseen loss of revenue to the state court. The changes implemented last July have caused a large drop in case closures and state revenue.

South Carolina: Judge Dash said that the state recently passed an open carry law. He is currently the president of the SC association; he explained his jurisdiction as a magistrate. He also does bond court.

Kansas: Judge TEMAAT reported that they suffered a security incident October 12th. It has shut down the state. In December, 2023, they were finally up and running. Down completely for three months, they are still finding bugs. The state has adjusted their salary schedule based on the federal schedule (for federal judges with similar jurisdiction). Judge Sutton said that the Arizona JP system is tied to magistrate salaries by a percentage based upon case numbers. Judge Dash offered that South Carolina's are based on county population for their base salary.

Montana: Judge Burman told the council that their Supreme Court has ruled that mandatory minimum fines are unconstitutional. She is waiting to see what effect that has on their courts. Her mayor has left and was greatly challenged by external circumstances. Her successor has been active in a way that required that Judge Burman take action and seeking information from the Montana Supreme Court. The mayor had fired the Court Clerk. The Supreme Court reinstated her clerk. A further order is pending.

Oregon: Judge HISSONG presented information about the Public Defender problems in Oregon. Five hundred new attorneys are needed to fill the gap currently in existence with 3200 people without counsel, 146 of who are in custody. Additionally, a federal Supreme Court case (City of Grants Pass vs. Johnson) . an 8th amendment case has been decided. It has to do with criminal cases involving the homeless population. The issue of the case rested on criminal cases against those living unsheltered. The decision preserves local choice of action and was handed down June 28, 2024. Lastly, the Hon. Cris Patnode has been elected to a new position as County Judge in Gilliam County, Oregon.

National Judges Education & Research Foundation: The Chair of the foundation, Judge TEMAAT, went over details for the annual auction. Foundation affairs are in order.

2023 Conference: Final information wrapping up last year's conference was reviewed by Judge Gray and Judge HISSONG.

2024 Conference: Judge Barnett and Judge Partridge again welcomed conference attendees and expressed their appreciation for Judge Sutton's participation as an instructor.

2025 Conference: Discussion, no action was taken.

Connection Committee: -0- report

New or Unfinished Business: -0-

Setting date, time and location of next meeting: President Gray is anticipating that the next meeting will be virtual. He would like to tentatively set for January, 2025 but no date or time was established.

We shared the Benediction and the meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m. by President Gray.

Respectfully submitted,

Candace A. HISSONG

Hon. Candace Hissong
Acting as recording secretary
At the request of the President



DUES FOR 2025-2026!

As a reminder, dues for the 2025-2026 year were due on July 1, 2025. If you have not yet paid, you are now considered delinquent. Please submit your payment ASAP to continue to be a part of this organization that is so vital for Courts of Limited Jurisdiction. They can be paid by check/money order mailed to the address at the end of the newsletter, or you can now pay online using a credit or debit card from our website. Please visit www.NationalJudgesAssociation.com to pay online.

We are an organization for ALL judges of ALL Courts of Limited Jurisdiction – I encourage everyone to grab their fellow judge and let them know how important this organization is and to become a member today! If you need more information, please reach out to me!

All regular members of the NJA are members of the National Judges Education and Research Foundation, and other interested parties are invited to join for a modest annual fee. The purpose of the foundation is to “promote and improve the Limited Jurisdiction Judge and the Limited Jurisdiction Courts through education and research by providing financial and other support to projects and groups that promulgate these objectives.

For applications or more information, please contact:

Hon. Candace Hissong
Snickerg28@gmail.com

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS!

PRESIDENT: Hon. Lamont Barnett (VT)

PRESIDENT ELECT: Hon. Derrick Dash (SC)

VICE PRESIDENT: Hon. Ellie Brown (AZ)

SECRETARY: Hon. Penny McPherson (MT)

SR. DIRECTOR: Hon. Carlton Gray (NM)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/TREASURER: Hon. Kerry Burman (MT)



STATE REPRESENTATIVES AND ALTERNATES!

ARIZONA – Hon. Darendra Day and Hon. Bill Sutton

MONTANA – Hon. Kerry Burman and Hon. Penny McPherson

NEW MEXICO – Hon. Collis Johnson and Hon. Cynthia Wagoner

OREGON – Hon. Candace Hissong

SOUTH CAROLINA – Hon. Derrick Dash

VERMONT – Hon. Lamont Barnett and Hon. Carolyn Partridge



CONTACT INFORMATION!

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NJAExecutiveDirector@yahoo.com

Find us on Facebook! National Judges Association (white logo)



“Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass under trees on a summer's day, listening to the murmur of the water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is by no means a waste of time.”

– John Lubbock, *The Use Of Life*