

Summary of 2001 Highlights of the United States District Court for the District of Maryland

District Court

- In February 2001, Judge Nickerson and Judge Legg each accepted an MDL case assignment and the Clerk's Office added both cases to CM/ECF for electronic filing.
- On April 30, 2001, David E. Johnson retired as chief of the Probation Office after 24 years of service. On the same date, Cedric C. Easter also retired as Mr. Johnson's chief deputy after 25 years of service.
- The bankruptcy and the district court were among the first in the nation to convert their email systems to Lotus Notes. The conversion was successful.
- The Fourth Circuit Judicial Council approved the consolidation of the Pretrial Services Office and the Probation Office as of May 1, 2001. William F. Henry, who had been serving as the chief of the Pretrial Services Office, was appointed as the chief of the consolidated agency.
- On May 1, 2001 the court approved an order delegating to Administrative Judge Catherine C. Blake all the responsibilities and powers of the chief judge.
- The Staff Attorneys' Office developed a procedure for expedited handling of habeas corpus cases involving immigration issues.
- The plaza outside of the front of the Baltimore Courthouse was substantially redesigned and re-landscaped. The Sugarman sculpture was restored and moved to a new site on the corner of Lombard and Hanover Streets. A ceremony rededicating the sculpture and celebrating the plaza renovations was held on June 19, 2001.
- Court staff is providing on-going assistance to the AO with its court mentoring project.
- Revised Local Rules were adopted effective July 1, 2001.
- The court approved an interim strategic report on July 9, 2001. A copy of the report is attached.
- In July 2001 a new telephone system was installed district wide that merged many court offices into one integrated system. The new system has eliminated several serious communication problems for both divisions.
- The Attorney Admission process was revamped and relocated to the Southern Division. Two new coordinators were hired.

- Court staff received Emergency Response and Evacuation training.
- Judge Motz permitted the first presentation of a trial witness's testimony by video conference and Judge Nickerson conducted the District's first video conference of a jury verdict. Judge Nickerson took the Southern Division jury verdict from a conference room in Baltimore.
- The court's performance on the CJRA reports continues to be exceptional. As of September 30, 2001, district and magistrate judges had only nine reportable motions.
- In the summer, the Information Technology Department debuted the Court's new electronic calendar.
- Judge Diana Motz of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit conducted a jury trial in the Southern Division.
- A reception was held in the Southern Division celebrating the opening of the new high tech Courtroom 2A and the renovation of Attorney Conference Rooms.
- The number of Social Security cases in the district continued to rise dramatically. The Fourth Circuit Judicial Council authorized an additional one-year clerkship to the court to assist in handling those cases.
- The Case Processing, Records and Docketing Departments of the Clerk's Office were reorganized to increase efficiency and provide better service to the public.
- The number of felon in possession cases instituted by the United States Attorney's Office under "Project Disarm" continued to increase. A number of the cases resulted in mistrials or acquittals.
- By August 2001 the Finance Department performed a complete audit of all Clerk's Office accounting functions, installed PACER for check research, and converted registry and Attorney Admissions accounts to COLB, our online banking process.
- The court began the process of establishing video conference links with the various correctional facilities that house pretrial detainees.
- The Administration Section of the Clerk's Office retrofitted the District's FAST security structure to comply with AO established security standards, realigned the FAST tables to established standards, and successfully converted to version 3.5.010 of FAST.
- The Voicematrix, automated juror telephone information system was selected and installed. The system will be operational on November 1, 2001.
- The Southern Division Arts Project was expanded to include the Montgomery County Arts and Humanities Council.

- A “one month or one trial” system was instituted for petit jurors.
- Clerk’s Office staff redesigned existing statistical reports and created quality control reports.
- The Probations Office presented an orientation on jury debriefing for court staff.
- The Clerk’s Office continues to work with the staff attorneys and the Bench on the review and revision of court forms and manuals. A new manual for *pro se* litigants was developed.
- The court hosted visiting judges from a number of foreign countries, including Portugal, Armenia, Russia, Argentina, Romania, Canada, Venezuela, and the Peoples Republic of China. Several judges from this district traveled to other countries to assist in international judicial educational exchange programs.