

**Tennessee
Judicial Family Institute
and
Judicial Mentoring Program
General Outline
August 24, 2022**

“The network provides an excellent opportunity for every member of a judge’s family to learn first-hand the responsibilities, duties, and ethical limitations that are placed upon each member of the family.”

Former Chief Justice William M. Barker
Tennessee Supreme Court, 2006

I. National Judicial Family Institute (JFI)¹

A. General Purpose

1. “The Judicial Family Institute (JFI) is a national organization dedicated to providing information and education on topics of concern and importance to judicial households and their extended family members.”
2. “We set aside personal differences in politics, geography and positions on controversial issues to attend to JFI matters.”
3. “Through educational programs, research, and this website, JFI encourages the exchange of information and resources between judicial branch educators and staff, judicial family members, and various organizations.”

B. Personal Observations

1. *“Being part of a judicial family, going through campaigns, reading newspaper articles about my father’s judicial decisions, and living a public life has bonded us as a family. It has also given me a sense of process, a subtle understanding of how our*

¹ “The JFI is a subcommittee of the Past President’s Committee of the Conference of Chief Justices and enjoys an affiliation with the National Center for State Courts, the host of our website.” The National JFI website can be found at judicialfamilyinstitute.org and by using the link to JFI found at www.tncourts.gov.

political system works, and a deep respect for those who choose to make it a career.”

Ruth Ann Newcomer, Court Relations Program Manager for the Supreme Court of Ohio.

2. *“The highly respected elderly judge was surprised and pleased to learn of the Judicial Family Institute when I was introduced to him as serving in our organization’s effort to provide helpful information to judicial families. I explained we share ideas on ethics, conflicts of interests, home and travel security, parenting in a high visibility situation, and other topics. He said he appreciated our work. Then as others moved on, with tears in his eyes, he grasped my forearm and privately and quietly said, “Tell them to spend more time with their children.””*

Jan Aikman Dickson, Founder of National Judicial Family Institute.

C. Online Topics (Articles, Videos, Resources, and Links)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Civics Education | 9. Emergency Preparedness |
| 2. Ethics | 10. Finances |
| 3. Family and Children | 11. Judicial Assistance |
| 4. Health and Quality of Life | 12. Law and Literature |
| 5. High-Profile Cases | 13. Media |
| 6. Security | 14. New Judge |
| 7. Mentoring | 15. Political Life |
| 8. Retirement | |

II. Tennessee Judicial Family Institute (TJFI)

A. Mission Statement

1. The Tennessee Judicial Family Network is an initiative of the Judicial Family Institute Committee of the Tennessee Judicial Conference. The primary focus is to identify the needs of and challenges confronting judicial families today while responding appropriately by making available useful information relevant to such issues.
2. The Tennessee Judicial Family Institute (TJFI) supports judges and their families through a broad range of programs, which include an association of judicial spouses and other judicial family members, annual conference plenary sessions, a judicial mentoring program, and online resources. The TJFI strives to convey a positive message that the judicial conference cares about the families of judges and is available to support their needs.

B. Historical Perspective

1. The TJFI was established as an *ad hoc* committee in 2003. Its purpose is “to encourage an exchange of positive information regarding the responsibilities and challenges of judicial families.” The institute serves as a valuable resource for judges and their family members with respect to a full range of pertinent topics.
2. In June 2005, the Tennessee Judicial Conference approved the transition of the TJFI from an *ad hoc* committee to a full standing committee of the Conference.

C. TJFI Judicial Conference Registration/Welcome Table

During each of the three annual Tennessee Judicial Conferences, the TJFI Committee hosts a registration and welcome table. Special emphasis with regard to judicial spouses and other judicial family members is offered during the June annual conference. The table provides beneficial information and copies of relevant articles, as well

as “hot topic” materials addressing the needs of and challenges confronting judicial families today.

D. Association of Judicial Spouses and Other Judicial Family Members

1. Creation

- a. The Association marked its inception during the Annual Conference of the Tennessee Judicial Conference in June 2006. Under the leadership of Ms. Catherine Barker, wife of Chief Justice Muecke Barker, the Association hosted an organizational meeting with an emphasis upon developing and implementing a support network for the corporate judicial family of the Tennessee Judicial Conference, similar to one offered by the State of Ohio.
- b. As the Association endeavors to identify the needs and concerns of judicial families, this network has supported educational and recreational opportunities designed to address pertinent issues impacting judicial family members today.

2. Specific Initiatives

- a. Judicial Family Member Activities during Judicial Conferences
 - 1. 2016 JFI hosted Nashville Sounds vs. Memphis Redbirds (picnic and game).
 - 2. 2017 JFI sponsored a family adventure at Bays Mountain Park and Planetarium.
- b. Educational Sessions
- c. Judicial Family Member Surveys, Directory, and Networking
- d. Door Prizes

- e. Annual Conference Coffee Breaks: “Jolt Before You Bolt”

E. Judicial Conference Plenary Sessions

1. In June 2004, during the Tennessee Judicial Conference’s annual meeting in Nashville, judges, spouses, and other judicial family members convened in plenary session to consider judicial family topics, including personality profiles, ethics, and avoiding conflicts of interest; managing the judge’s own family challenges; and managing stress. These joint sessions benefitted both judges and their families by addressing appropriate means of functioning effectively while dealing with the challenges associated with public family life. A panel discussion of participants, which included judges, judicial spouses, and judicial children, focused upon judicial family issues. Moderator Jan Aikman Dickson of the National JFI Committee facilitated the plenary session discussion.

2. Additional Tennessee Judicial Conference plenary session presentations have been offered during judicial conferences as follows:

2005	Judicial Family Security
2006	Judicial Family Ethics
2006	The Tennessee Judicial Mentoring Program
2007	Protecting Your Personal Privacy
2008 (1)	Stress and the Judicial Family
(2)	Investing in Judicial Retirement and Deferred Compensation Benefits Review
2009	Stress Resilience
2010 (1)	Online Social Networking and the Ethical Implications for Judicial Family Members
(2)	Benefits and Retirement Programs for Judicial Family Members
2011	The Emotional and Spiritual Journey to Recovery
2012	Thriving in Times of Change: Mastering Resilience
2015	TCRS and Deferred Compensation (JFI sponsored program for spouses/family members)
2017	“Journey to Retirement”

2018	Judicial Family Institute Compensation Presentation
2019	RetireReady – TCRS & Empower
2019	JFI Mentor Judge Training

- F. Tennessee Judicial Mentoring Program (a collaborative initiative of the Tennessee Judicial Family Institute Committee and the Retired Judges Committee of the Tennessee Judicial Conference, October 2019)

Mission Statement

Tennessee’s Judicial Mentoring Program was established in 2005 as a means of orienting new judges to the bench. The initiative was designed to formalize individual mentoring relationships among participating members of the Tennessee judiciary. Through the program, a mentor judge is assigned to assist and counsel each new judge of the conference. The primary aim of the mentoring program is to provide an appropriate, comprehensive approach to the responsibilities and challenges immediately experienced by new judges. As mentoring is only one component of socializing and inducting new judges into the judiciary, additional resources, such as pre-bench orientation and post-induction education, are contemplated. All new judges are encouraged to engage actively in the mentoring process for at least one year following election or appointment to the bench.

Historical Background

As explained in The Judicial Education Reference Information and Technical Transfer Project’s (“JERITT’s”) “Mentoring in the Judiciary”:

While mentoring has become a popular development strategy, its origins can be traced to Greek mythology. When Odysseus went off to the Trojan War, he charged his household manager, Mentor, with the education and development of his son, Telemachus. Mentor acted as Telemachus’

teacher, coach, taskmaster, confidant, counselor and friend (Clawson, 1980).

Later, the emphasis of mentoring shifted away from an all-encompassing life mentor to a more focused career mentor. When skilled trade guilds emerged in the 1500s, new trainees (apprentices) were mentored by skilled trade masters until achieving a high level of proficiency in the trade. In early graduate education, students sought-out (or paid for) the sponsorship of a major professor to guide their mastery of the discipline. Before medical schools, trainees would “read medicine” under the guidance of a practicing physician.

In the 1970s, the fields of management development and adult development led the modern resurgence of mentoring as a career development strategy. Kanter’s book, *Men and Women of the Corporation* (1979) and Roche’s article “Much Ado About Mentors” in a 1979 issue of the *Harvard Business Review* are generally recognized for reestablishing mentoring as a management development strategy. Their research indicated that executives who had mentors earned more money at a younger age, were better educated, were more likely to follow their initial career paths and enjoyed greater career satisfaction than those executives who did not have mentors. Their overall conclusion was that strong mentoring relationships were associated with a variety of positive career outcomes.

(2nd ed, 1999).

Administrative Structure

The Tennessee Judicial Mentoring Program shall be further developed, implemented, and maintained under the joint

direction of the Tennessee Judicial Family Institute (TJFI) Committee and Retired Judges Committee. Regional mentoring program coordinators, selected by the joint committees, shall be responsible for organizing and administering the program as well as disseminating appropriate information to all participants. The program shall be further facilitated by Mr. John R. Crawford, Education Manager, and Ms. Stephanie Holliday, Human Resource Manager, of the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC).

The Role of the Mentoring Program

Mentor judges shall include any current, senior, former, or retired judges/justices expressing a desire and willingness to serve in such capacity. A mentor shall be assigned to assist and counsel each new judge who agrees to voluntarily participate in the program. Mentor Assignment Guidelines shall be established and incorporated by the committees regarding all assignments. This ensures that each new judge receives appropriate guidance and support as a new member of the judiciary. Immediately after a judge's election or appointment to the bench, the mentor shall be available to assist in the transition.

Mentors maintain a primary responsibility for assisting new judges by familiarizing them with pertinent topics, including the parameters of the judicial mentoring program, details of closing a law practice, employment procedures/policies, ethical considerations, and tips for living in a judicial family. The mentoring relationship shall commence upon the new judge's election/appointment and shall continue for a period of at least twelve months.

Description of Mentoring

The approach of the mentor must be crafted to accommodate different personality types as well as learning styles of the new judges. The mentor shall be instructed to initiate the first meeting immediately upon the new judge's election/appointment.

Mentors are encouraged to convey the need to strike an appropriate balance between the relaxed informality needed to establish rapport through free-flowing dialogue and the requisite amount of formality needed to ensure that meetings take place and every important topic is discussed. Mentors are instructed to establish ground rules with new judges about monthly or more frequently scheduled conferences. The mentor shall also establish guidelines for impromptu consultation as needed. Mentor judges are encouraged to make a commitment to accept interruptions for emergencies, even during trials or hearings. A judge unwilling to take an occasional five-minute recess to receive a call from a new judge is discouraged from volunteering to serve as a mentor.

The mentoring program relationship shall continue for at least twelve months. The mentor and new judge shall establish convenient and appropriate parameters of the judicial mentoring relationship. All participating judges shall be instructed to participate in an evaluation survey at the end of the twelve-month mentoring process.

Mentor Selection Guidelines

The Tennessee Judicial Mentoring Program recognizes that a significant component of a successful mentoring relationship is the selection of effective mentors. The committees have adopted the following guidelines for enlisting members of the Tennessee Judicial Conference to serve as mentor judges:

1. The mentor must possess several years of judicial experience.
2. The mentor must demonstrate a genuine desire to share that experience with a new judge.
3. The mentor must exhibit strong counseling characteristics by using objective listening skills and allowing the new judge to reach his/her own decision.

4. The mentor must be capable of offering advice and support while refraining from any evaluation process.
5. The mentor must provide encouragement by affirming the abilities and competencies of the new judge.
6. The mentor must have strong communication skills.
7. The mentor must be readily accessible and devote adequate time to the mentoring relationship.
8. The mentor must manifest a calm, positive, and realistic approach.
9. The mentor must be committed to meeting the needs of the new judge.
10. The mentor must be familiar with the organizational structure of the Judicial Conference and the resources available through the AOC.
11. The mentor must respect the Code of Judicial Conduct and similar principles of judicial ethics.
12. The mentor must demonstrate strong and appropriate teaching skills.
13. The panel of trained mentors must appropriately reflect the gender, racial, ethnic and age diversities which complement the Tennessee Judicial Conference.
14. The mentor must be committed to the goals of the program.

Mentor Judge Orientation

Mentors shall receive written orientation and program materials before serving. The general mentor judge training topics have been adopted by the committees. A Judicial Mentor Manual shall be provided to all mentors for use in connection with the

mentoring process. A checklist of topics for discussion, as well as a protocol for mentor contact with the new judge, shall be included in the materials. Mentor judges shall be required to familiarize themselves with the key attributes of the Judicial Mentoring Program, as well as all applicable guidelines.

Mentor Assignment Guidelines

The assignment and matching of mentor judges with new judges will be based upon an “arranged partnership” model whereby the committees will match the mentor judge and new judge according to specific criteria. Regional coordinators will have primary responsibilities for making appropriate judicial mentor assignments. The matching of mentors with new judges requires careful consideration of several factors, which shall include:

1. The mentor judge and new judge should be members of the same judicial district.
2. The mentor and new judge must exhibit a mutual commitment to participate in the mentoring program according to its new guidelines for at least one year.
3. The mentor and new judge must exhibit a mutual respect and trust regarding the relationship and should be of the same gender.
4. The mentor and new judge should maintain similar case jurisdiction where possible.
5. Although a specific mentor shall be assigned to each participating new judge, all mentor judges are available for consultation regarding areas in which they maintain expertise.
6. If reasonable and sufficient grounds exist, a new judge may request the regional coordinators to reassign a mentor judge.

7. The committees shall be assisted by the Administrative Office of the Courts when necessary.
8. A mentor judge may be assigned to more than one new judge at the same time.

The Legacy of Mentoring

Judicial mentoring has personal, organizational, and professional rewards, exceeding what may be the original intent of a mentor and a new judge participating in the mentoring program. The act of mentoring enriches the mentor. Serving as a mentor is an affirmation of the mentor's knowledge and experience as well as his or her significance to the judicial conference.

For the new judge, being mentored is an affirming experience, which facilitates the judge's ability to become an involved member of the conference and the judiciary. For the judicial conference, mentoring serves as a vehicle by which a new judge can more easily learn both the formal and informal structures of the organization and be an early contributor to the conference's success. The judiciary is further shaped and advanced by the new judge's contribution to its endeavors. A successful mentoring program promotes public confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the judiciary. Whether mentoring is individually spontaneous or formalized through the establishment of a mentoring program, it creates and provides opportunities far beyond those originally contemplated. Mentoring leaves a lasting legacy.

“Mentors can act as important confidants and help newer judges recognize and address their stress. Mentors can also help new judges conduct their duties in ways that minimize stress.”

Monica K. Miller, David M. Flores, and Ashley N. Dolezilek, *Addressing the Problem of Courtroom Stress*, 91:2 *Judicature* (2007).

G. Community Outreach Initiatives

1. During the February 2007 Conference of Chief Justices held in New Orleans, Louisiana, the National Judicial Family Institute sponsored a volunteer project visit for judicial family members to the Albert Wicker Elementary School. During the visit, participants had an opportunity to make book donations to the school library, which had been devastated by Hurricane Katrina.
2. During the June 2011 Tennessee Judicial Conference in Chattanooga, the TJFI sponsored a visit by judicial family members to the Children's Hospital at Erlanger. During the visit, participants had an opportunity to read to young patients and leave as gifts copies of the book, *Count On Us, A Tennessee Number Book* by Michael Shoulders, which had been signed by appellate and trial court judges.
3. During the June 2018 Tennessee Judicial Conference in Memphis, the TJFI sponsored the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital Guest Event. Participating judicial family members joined the St. Jude staff for a service project on the hospital campus.

H. TJFI Logo

1. The Judicial Family Institute Committee has developed a JFI logo, which facilitates the dissemination of pertinent information and heightens awareness of JFI initiatives during judicial conferences.

2.



- I. TJFI presents sessions explaining the purposes of the Judicial Family Institute and the Tennessee Judicial Mentoring Program during certain Tennessee Judicial Academy Conferences.
- J. Out-of-State Presentations
 - 1. *Judicial Family Institute Programs*, Conference of Chief Justices, Williamsburg, VA., January, 2008.
 - 2. *Stress Resilience for the Judicial Family*, Nevada Judicial Leadership Summit, 2012.

III. Final Analysis

- A. *“The Judicial Family Institute, Inc. applauds lawyers who are willing to serve as judges. Their work makes a very big difference to individuals, communities, and the rule of law in a democratic society. JFI encourages judges’ families to be supportive and judges to persevere. Being a member of a judge’s family holds some special opportunities and challenges. Balancing a good attitude with concrete steps to manage the unique features of judicial family life results in maximum enjoyment of being in a judge’s family. Judicial educators and judiciary-related organizations invite families to access materials and participate in educational programs that will increase their awareness of solutions to judicial family life challenges.”*
JFI History and Mission, July 12, 2001.
- B. *“The family is a harbor of safety in an ocean of change. In this kinship, we find the strength to swim together and eventually the courage to swim apart.”*
Anonymous