



2022 ANNUAL REPORT



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the U.S. District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands is to serve the community by ensuring equal access to justice for all by providing an impartial forum to resolve disputes in a fair, effective, and timely manner pursuant to the rule of law.



The District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands was established by an act of Congress in 1977 and became operational in January 1978. It sits on the island of Saipan in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, but may also sit at other places within the Commonwealth. The District Court has the same jurisdiction to hear federal cases as other United States district courts, including bankruptcy cases. Appeals are taken directly to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

The District Court is the smallest and youngest of the 94 district courts across the nation. It has one active district judge who employs three chambers staff, and 12 clerk's office staff. The Clerk of Court also serves as the Magistrate Judge. The Office of the Pretrial and Probation Services for the Districts of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands has three employees stationed on Saipan. These hard-working court employees serve the community by ensuring all facets of court services run properly.

Citizens from the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota provide an invaluable service to the Court and the community each year by serving as jurors during civil and criminal trials and grand jury proceedings.



View of the Saipan lagoon from the Office of the Clerk of Court.

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District Court at Dusk photo taken by Amena Mahmud, 11th Grade, Marianas High School
Third Place winner of the 2022 Law Day Photo Contest

FOREWORD



Greetings, Hafa Adai yan Tirow!

I am excited to share the 2022 Annual Report for the U.S. District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands with you. The Annual Report highlights some of the many accomplishments our court has enjoyed this past year.

Just as the world adjusted to living with the COVID-19 pandemic for a second year, so did we. The Court's safety protocols evolved in response to the ebbs and flow of the COVID-19 virus and its variations within our community. With the improvement of conditions, the District Court held its long-awaited formal ribbon-cutting ceremony, which had been delayed by two years because of the pandemic. We welcomed distinguished guests from near and far to celebrate and enjoy the District Court's new facilities. The day after the ribbon-cutting ceremony, the court held its District Court Conference in person after it had been scaled down with virtual presenters the past two years.

At the conference, the District Court welcomed various speakers including U.S. Department of Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs Carmen G. Cantor and Ninth Circuit Judge Richard R. Clifton. Jurists from the Oceania region were also in attendance, and the first Alex R. Munson Professionalism Award was awarded to the late William M. Fitzgerald.

A total of eighteen naturalization ceremonies took place throughout the year, and 317 individuals from sixteen countries as well as American Samoa were sworn in as newly minted United States citizens. The new citizens were encouraged to use their new right – the right to vote – in order to fulfill their civic duty and contribute to the community as jurors. Community outreach was encouraged at every level. The District Court participated in many annual events including: the Ninth Circuit Civics Contest; the Law Day Read-a-Loud with the Judges, in partnership with the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library; the District Court's Law Day Photo Contest; and the Red Ribbon Campaign.

These undertakings would not have been possible without the dedicated staff. I am grateful for each of them, and I am very proud to work along side them to strive to accomplish our mission statement every day.

Si Yu'us Ma'ase,

Ramona V. Manglona
Chief Judge

JUDGES



RAMONA V. MANGLONA
Chief Judge

On January 26, 2011, President Barack Obama nominated the Honorable Ramona V. Manglona to serve as District Court Judge for the Northern Mariana Islands. Judge Manglona's nomination was confirmed by the Senate on July 27, 2011. Two days later, President Obama signed her commission, which was the official act of appointment of Judge Manglona to the District Court. Judge Manglona assumed office as Chief Judge on July 30, 2011. She is the first person of Northern Marianas descent to serve as a federal judge.



ALEX R. MUNSON
Senior Judge

In 1988, President Ronald Reagan nominated Senior Judge Alex R. Munson and the Senate confirmed the nomination as District Judge for the Northern Mariana Islands. Judge Munson was nominated for a second ten-year term by President William J. Clinton and was confirmed by the Senate in 1998. In February 2010, Judge Munson took senior status after twenty-eight years of service in the legal community, including his service as Chief Justice of the High Court of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands from 1982 to 1988. Judge Munson continues to serve the District Court and the community by presiding over settlement conferences and other court matters in our District as well as the District Court of Guam.



HEATHER L. KENNEDY
Clerk of Court/
Magistrate Judge

Judge Heather L. Kennedy became Clerk of Court on April 15, 2013. Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona appointed Heather L. Kennedy to also serve as a Magistrate Judge on June 11, 2013. Judge Kennedy is the first Magistrate Judge for the District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands and the only Clerk of Court/Magistrate Judge currently serving in the federal court system. As a part-time U.S. Magistrate Judge, Judge Kennedy is appointed to serve four year terms. After an evaluation process, including public comments and review by a Merit Selection Panel, Chief Judge Manglona re-appointed Judge Kennedy to a third term on June 11, 2021. Judge Kennedy is currently the Chair of the Ninth Circuit's Magistrate Judges Executive Board, and has served as the Magistrate Judge Observer to the Ninth Circuit Judicial Council since October 2021.

DESIGNATED JUDGES

On occasion, federal judges from districts throughout the Ninth Circuit preside over certain matters in our District. The District Court is grateful to Chief Judge Frances M. Tydingco-Gatewood (District of Guam), Judge David O. Carter (Central District of California), and Chief Bankruptcy Judge Robert J. Faris (District of Hawaii) for their assistance.



FRANCES M. TYDINGCO-GATEWOOD
Chief Judge
U.S. District Court of Guam

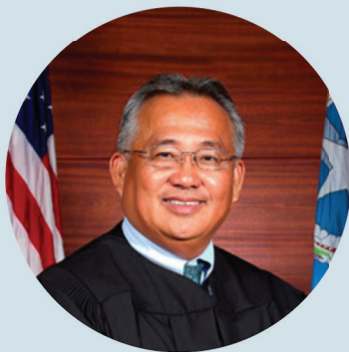


DAVID O. CARTER
District Judge
U.S. District Court
Central District of California



ROBERT J. FARIS
Chief Bankruptcy Judge
U.S. District Court of Hawaii

Pursuant to 48 U.S.C. § 1821, judges of courts of record of the Northern Mariana Islands may be assigned temporarily to serve in the District Court. The District Court thanks Presiding Judge Roberto C. Naraja and Associate Judge Teresa K. Kim-Tenorio of the Commonwealth Superior Court for their service to this Court as designated judges.



ROBERTO C. NARAJA
Presiding Judge
CNMI Superior Court



TERESA K. KIM-TENORIO
Associate Judge
CNMI Superior Court

LAWYER REPRESENTATIVES

CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT RESOURCE COUNSEL



BRUCE L. BERLINE

Bruce L. Berline is the District Court's Criminal Justice Act (CJA) Representative and Resource Counsel. In districts that do not have a federal public defender, such as the Northern Mariana Islands, the District Court appoints a Resource Counsel to provide support and guidance to the CJA panel members, and to liaise with the Defender Services Office in Washington D.C. and other CJA panel representatives throughout the nation. Mr. Berline is also the chairperson of the CJA Standing Committee. He, along with Robert T. Torres and David G. Banes, assist the District Court in ensuring the CJA panel consists of knowledgeable and well-trained attorneys capable of upholding the guarantee of the Sixth Amendment by providing competent counsel to indigent individuals charged with crimes. Mr. Berline has served the court as CJA Representative and Resource Counsel since 2015. He has been a member of the CJA panel since 1999 and has been in practice in the CNMI for over 25 years, with a focus on criminal defense, admiralty, and personal injury litigation.

NINTH CIRCUIT LAWYER REPRESENTATIVES



VINCENT J. SEMAN

Vincent J. Seman served as our District's Ninth Circuit Lawyer Representative from 2017 to 2022. Seman opened his law practice, Seman Law Office, LLC, in November 2019. Before starting his own firm, he served as general counsel for Century Insurance. Prior to joining Century Insurance, he was an attorney with Carlsmith Ball, LLP. He is licensed to practice law in the CNMI, Guam, and Hawaii. From 2011–2022, Mr. Seman served in numerous governmental, professional, and civic organizations, including the Northern Marianas College Board of Regents, the Saipan Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, and the CNMI Bar Association Board of Directors. He is also a Pacific Century Fellow. Mr. Seman received his Juris Doctor from Whittier Law School and his B.S. degree in management from Bentley College.



NICOLE M. TORRES-RIPPLE

In 2022, Nicole M. Torres-Ripple was elected by the CNMI Bar Association and appointed by the Chief Judge to succeed Mr. Seman as the District's Ninth Circuit Lawyer Representative. In this capacity, she actively engages with other lawyer representatives to bring to light the challenges and important issues in each district, plans and executes engaging panel discussions to address these challenges, and discusses these issues at the Ninth Circuit's Annual Conference of Chief District Judges. She also coordinates continuing legal education for District Court bar members through the Annual District Conference and assists in planning District Court outreach programs.

In 2016, Mrs. Torres-Ripple joined the NMI Settlement Fund as In-House Counsel. Prior to joining the Settlement Fund, she served as the law clerk to Chief Justice Alexandro C. Castro of the CNMI Supreme Court. Mrs. Torres-Ripple has previously served on numerous court and professional committees, including the District Merit Selection Panel, District Conference planning committee, NMI Supreme Court Rules committee, CNMI Bar Association Board of Directors, and CNMI Bar Association Continuing Legal Education, Bylaws, and Executive Director Selection committees. She has also served as the coordinator and planning committee member for NMI Judiciary outreach programs, including the NMI Judiciary Summer Pre-law Program, Mock Trial Academy, and High School Mock Trial competition. She was also a coach and juror for high school mock trial. Mrs. Torres-Ripple proudly hails from the NMI—she grew up in Saipan, graduated from Grace Christian Academy, and returned to the NMI in 2013 after earning her J.D. at the University of Hawai'i Richardson School of Law and obtaining her B.A. in sociology, summa cum laude, with a minor in legal studies from the University of San Francisco. She is married to James W. K. Ripple, PE, and they are blessed with a beautiful daughter, Maile Priscilla.



Left to Right: Incoming Lawyer Representative Nicole Torres-Ripple, Chief Judge Manglona, and outgoing Lawyer Representative Vince Seman.

ATTORNEY ADMISSIONS

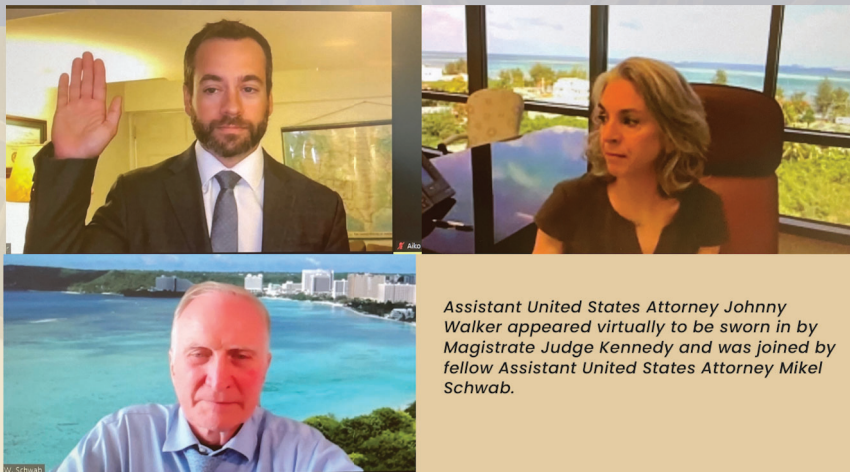
ATTORNEY ADMISSION FUND

The Attorney Admission Fund is primarily used to support educational programs and events for members of the District Court Bar, including the annual district conference and other continuing legal education programs throughout the year. Other expenditures include support for civics programs for students, the Drug Offender Re-Entry (DORE) Program, the reimbursement of attorney costs associated with attorney disciplinary matters, and support for the Pacific Judicial Council.



In 2018, the District Court first implemented Local Rule 83.5, which established the Attorney Admission Biennial Renewal fee of \$30.00. The renewal fee ensures funding for educational programs and provides the District Court with an updated, accurate listing of current bar members.

Three attorneys were temporarily admitted to practice in 2022. As of 2022, the District Court Bar membership has 167 permanent and 41 temporary members.



Assistant United States Attorney Johnny Walker appeared virtually to be sworn in by Magistrate Judge Kennedy and was joined by fellow Assistant United States Attorney Mikel Schwab.

NEXTGEN PROJECT

The NextGen project aimed to upgrade the District Court's case management system. The upgrade began in October 2021 beginning with the bankruptcy system and then the civil/criminal system. The Bankruptcy and District NextGen upgrades were completed in January 2022. Essentially, the Central Sign-On (CSO) functionality allows attorneys to maintain one account for access to all NextGen courts (appellate, bankruptcy, and district), and access to PACER for all courts. The project was accomplished through the efforts of several court employees. IT Systems Manager Glenn Mendoza was assisted by Ken Weingold from the Southern District of New York, Bankruptcy Court (NYSB), through a shared services agreement with NYSB. They worked late into the night on systems implementation. Chambers Administrator Amanda Hayes took the lead role as Project Manager. She was responsible for planning, organizing, and directing the completion of the project. Amanda excelled as the project lead with support from Operations Supervisor Tim Wesley, who took on the role of Co-Project Manager. Tim handled the Dictionary and Site Table entries and coordinated the training and testing for the project, all while on paternity leave for most of the project timeline. Last, but not least, Michelle Macaranas, Financial Administrator, ensured the Court's transition to the Pay.gov platform for credit card processing, an integral part of NextGen implementation. All four of these NMI employees received the Court's Special Achievement Award for their work and completion of the NextGen project. A special thank you and *si Yu'us ma'ase* to Ken Weingold for all his assistance.



Left to Right: Chambers Administrator Amanda Hayes with Chief Judge Manglona, Ken Weingold from the Southern District Court New York, and IT Systems Manager Glenn Mendoza.



CM/ECF eFiling



Regular Business Hours. On Monday, July 27, 2020, the Court resumed regular business hours, which are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on legal holidays. The intake counter at the Clerk's Office closes during the lunch hour from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. and at 4:30 p.m. each business day, except for the last business day of each month when the intake counter closes at 3:30 p.m.. The Courthouse in Gualo Rai is open and the public may attend open court proceedings.

Effective Friday, May 27, 2022, the use of face masks and social distancing shall now be optional based on personal preference as set forth in [General Order No. 22-00004](#). Social distancing accommodations may be provided upon request.

NextGen CM/ECF

To access case information from the District CM/ECF or Bankruptcy CM/ECF, you will be required to login using your PACER (Public Access to Court Electronic Records) account issued by the PACER Service Center. If you have not registered, and wish to gain access to any of these systems, please visit the PACER Service Center at <https://pacer.uscourts.gov/register-account>.

🔗 [District CM/ECF - For Civil, Criminal, and Miscellaneous Cases](#)

🔗 [Bankruptcy CM/ECF - For Bankruptcy Cases](#)

Have questions or need assistance with District or Bankruptcy Electronic Case Filing? Contact ecfhelpdesk@nmid.uscourts.gov.

[Are you Ready for NextGen CM/ECF?](#)

What is new for attorneys in NextGen?

Central Sign-On (CSO) is new functionality that will allow attorneys to maintain one account across all Next Gen courts (appellate, bankruptcy, and district). This means that attorneys will

The District Court's website provides helpful information about the NextGen Project implementation completed in 2022.



CNMI JUDICIARY PRE-LAW PROGRAM

The District Court provided assistance to the CNMI Judiciary Summer Pre-Law Program, which resumed its program in 2022. It was the ninth cycle conducted since the first cycle held in 1991. About 35 alumni have graduated from law schools throughout the United States, including Chief Judge Manglona herself. The program encourages and supports participants who are interested in attending law school. The three week program provided intensive law school classes taught by visiting faculty Professor Rose Cuison-Villazor, Interim Dean of Rutgers Law School, and Professor Eun Hee Han from Georgetown Law School, both raised in Saipan. In addition, the participants received mentoring by experienced attorneys; LSAT workshops; courthouse tours of Guma' Hustisia and U.S. District Court for the NMI; and concluded with a moot court component in which the participants argued before members of the bench and bar, including Chief Judge Manglona and Magistrate Judge Kennedy. On July 12, 2022, a graduation ceremony was held for the 19 participants at Guma' Hustisia in Susupe. Two of the District Court's Clerk's office staff, Daniel Brown and Lallane Guiao-Seng, participated in the program.



Chief Judge Manglona speaking about the District Court and sharing her experience as a former Pre-Law Program participant.



The Pre-Law Program participants and Professor Han and Interim Dean Cuison-Villazor (front row, fourth and fifth from the left) with members of the bench from the CNMI Supreme Court and U.S. District Court after Moot Court rounds.



The District Court's Deputy Clerk Lallane Guiao-Seng was selected by her peers to give remarks at the Pre-Law Program Graduation Ceremony at Guma' Hustisia in Susupe.



The 2022 Pre-Law Program participants and Interim Dean Rose Cuison-Villazor from Rutgers Law School toured the District Court and held a meet and greet with Chief Judge Manglona and Magistrate Judge Kennedy.

RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY



Chief Judge Manglona welcomes the guests from on island and off-island.

The District Court held its long-awaited ribbon-cutting ceremony on September 16, 2022. Having moved into the Gualo Rai Courthouse in the midst of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, an immediate grand opening was not possible. The relaxation of health and safety measures in 2022 allowed the District Court to formally open its doors to the public.

In her welcoming remarks, Chief Judge Manglona expressed her gratitude to the many individuals and entities involved in the construction and development of the new courthouse. She described its many functional, aesthetic, and state-of-the-art technology features; chronicled the journey from the Horiguchi Building in Garapan; and cited security concerns for the move.



Traditional Carolinian Entrance Mass Dance by Refaluwasch Warriors.



Saipan Southern High School Battalion presented the Colors, and the Marianas High School Rhythm and Glee Club sang the National Anthems.





UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE
Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



Friday, September 16, 2022 at 2:00 p.m.
1671 Gualo Rai Road, Saipan
Northern Mariana Islands

Order of Ceremony

GREETINGS

MASTERS OF CEREMONY
Bo T. Palacios and Daniel I. Brown

MAAS ENTRANCE PERFORMANCE
Refaluwasch Warriors

POSTING OF THE COLORS
Saipan Southern High School
Manta Ray Battalion Color Guard

NATIONAL AND CNMI ANTHEMS
Marianas High School
Rhythm 'N Harmony Glee Club

WELCOMING REMARKS
The Honorable Ramona V. Manglona
Chief Judge, U.S. District Court for the NMI

The Honorable Alex R. Munson
Senior Judge, U.S. District Court for the NMI

GUEST SPEAKERS

Dan R. Brown
Regional Commissioner, Public Buildings Service
Pacific Rim Region, U.S. General Services Administration

Somia T. Quan
Representative of
Marianas Management Corporation

CLOSING REMARKS
The Honorable Heather L. Kennedy
Clerk of Court-Magistrate Judge
U.S. District Court for the NMI

Ribbon Cutting

RETIRING OF THE COLORS
COURTHOUSE GUIDED TOURS



Light refreshments following ceremony
sponsored by Marianas Management Corporation



Senior Judge Alex R. Munson traveled from his home in Idaho to join the festivities and share his background knowledge about procuring a new courthouse.



Dan R. Brown, U.S. General Services Administration Regional Commissioner of Public Buildings Service for the Pacific Rim Region, delivers his remarks.



Somia T. Quan from Marianas Management Corporation (landlord) expresses gratitude to the contractors and various government agencies who made the construction of the courthouse possible.

The Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Pamphlet with Order of Ceremony and Guest Speakers.



Senior Circuit Judge Richard Clifton represented Ninth Circuit Chief Judge Mary Murguia and delivered her prepared remarks as well as his own.



Magistrate Judge Kennedy thanked the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony organizers.



L-R: U.S. Dept. of Interior and International Affairs Assistant Secretary Carmen G. Cantor, Chief Judge Frances M. Tydingco-Gatewood (District Court of Guam), Norman Tenorio (Marianas Management Corporation), Chief Judge Manglona, General Services Administration (GSA) Region 9 Commissioner Dan Brown, Federal Protective Service Director Eric L. Peterson, Senior Circuit Judge Richard R. Clifton, U.S. Attorney Shawn Anderson, U.S. Marshal Fernando Sablan, and Magistrate Judge Kennedy.

“
The new courthouse ... is one that is representative of the collaborative efforts of a diverse set of stakeholders all working together to ensure a secure and stable home for justice' in the CNMI.
 ”
 -Chief Judge Manglona



L-R: Justice John A. Manglona (CNMI Supreme Court), Judge Daniel P. Collins (D. Arizona Bankruptcy), CNMI Chief Justice Alexandro C. Castro, Magistrate Judge Michael J. Bordallo (District of Guam); Justice Kate Sali (Palau Supreme Court), Chief Judge Frances M. Tydingco-Gatewood (District of Guam), Senior Circuit Judge Richard R. Clifton, Chief Judge Manglona, Assistant Secretary Carmen G. Cantor, GSA Region 9 Commissioner Dan Brown, Magistrate Judge Kennedy, GSA Lease Admin. Specialist Tamara Gibson, Senior Judge Munson, Justice Robert T. Torres (Guam Supreme Court), Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja (CNMI Superior Court), and Judge Arthur R. Barcinas (Guam Superior Court).

HISTORICAL TIMELINE

A historical timeline of the District Court from 1978 to present. The District Court did not have a permanent space, moving from a hotel in Garapan to the Nauru Building in Susupe before moving to its longest place of operation, the Horiguchi building in Garapan. With the 2020 move to Gualo Rai, the District Court has found a permanent, secure, and state-of-the-art building. The timeline below details the Court's historical locations.

1978-1981

Conducting court proceedings near the pool at SAIPAN BEACH INTERCONTINENTAL INN

The District Court was initially located on the first floor near a poolside suite of the Saipan Beach Inter-Continental Inn in Garapan. The hotel's banquet room served as a makeshift partitioned courtroom, which could be readily opened to accommodate jury trials. The judge's bench consisted of a steel desk secured to a raised wooden platform about ten inches off the floor. The law clerk's office was a mere 30 feet from the hotel's swimming pool and a few more steps to the beach.



1981-1990

NAURU BUILDING, SUSUPE

In April 1978, the federal government began negotiations for space rental at the newly opened Nauru Building in Susupe. Soon, it started converting space on the third floor to meet the needs of a federal district court, complete with a small wood-paneled courtroom, library, judge's chambers, and staff offices.

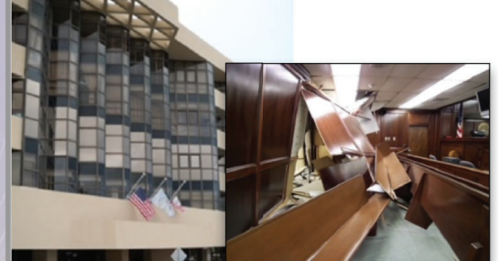
On July 27, 1981, after three years at the hotel site, the District Court moved to the Nauru Building where Chief Judge Alfred Laureta conducted hearings and trials, and the appellate division of the District Court sat as a panel to hear appeals from the Commonwealth Trial Court. The new setting provided a more secure environment and the formality needed for court operations.



1990-2020

HORIGUCHI BUILDING, GARAPAN

After eight years at the Nauru Building, court operations required a larger space. In 1990, Chief Judge Munson moved the District Court to the converted Horiguchi Building condominiums in Garapan to meet its growing needs. The building provided a larger courtroom on the ground floor, spacious chambers, a library, and the Office of the Clerk of Court on the second floor, a grand jury room on the third floor, and the Office of Pretrial and Probation on the fourth floor. Within a decade, security concerns prompted Chief Judge Munson to begin the search for a new courthouse. After a van crashed into the first floor courtroom in 2010, the need for a more secure building became more urgent. In 2011, Chief Judge Mangiona undertook the quest for a new courthouse.



Left photo: The Court security screening station, located at Horiguchi Building's main entry, was only a few feet away from the road.

Right photo: In August 2010, a van rammed through the ground floor courtroom, destroying several rows of the public gallery seating.

DECEMBER 7, 2017

THE NEW U.S. COURTHOUSE

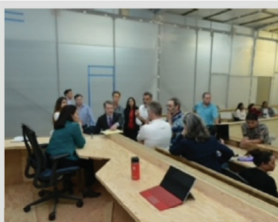
GROUND-BREAKING IN GUALO RAI

GSA worked with all the courthouse stakeholders to procure a site which met the stringent requirements of federal regulations and policies, such as minimum elevation levels to rise above tsunami and flood zones and building setbacks for security. Ultimately, the Gualo Rai site proved to be the most suitable location, and GSA selected Marianas Management Corporation in 2017 as the landlord to build the new courthouse. Groundbreaking occurred for the long-awaited building on December 7, 2017.

During the two and a half year construction period, labor shortages, Super Typhoon Yutu and the onset of the pandemic presented major challenges, but MMC addressed them immediately and successfully turned over the building in June 2020 in time for a "soft opening" on July 27, 2020.

The 35,696 square-foot building houses the U.S. District Court, U.S. Pretrial and Probation Office, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Attorney's Office, and Federal Protective Service. The three-story courthouse has a courtroom, two judges' chambers, a grand jury room, a jury assembly room, and office space for building tenants. It meets current requirements for the judiciary's functional and security needs. The design also incorporates innovative lighting and landscaping, energy efficient fixtures, and wastewater technologies projected to realize future cost savings and conserve resources. The courtroom has unique skylights and most offices have an expansive view of the Saipan lagoon and Pacific Ocean.

Right photo: Chief Judge Mangiona consults with court staff and architects from EXP and the Ninth Circuit, including Assistant Circuit Executive for Space and Facilities, Cliff Harlan, RA (center) during the construction phase of the project. The mock courtroom allowed the court and building teams to improve the final design and function of the future courtroom.



DECEMBER 2017-JUNE 2020

U.S. DISTRICT COURTHOUSE CONSTRUCTION



Left: Chief Judge Mangiona, shown with Master of Ceremony Bo T. Palacios of Marianas Management Corporation, gave her remarks at the December 7, 2017 groundbreaking ceremony.

Photos below: The ceremony's program and the turning of the shovels.

Program	
Giving of Ground	Don't Know
Color Guard	Midway High School (2007)
Religious Anthem	Marjorie High School Chorus
Invocation	Rev. Dr. Walter Paul
Remarks	Chief Judge Mangiona, Master of Ceremony Bo T. Palacios, U.S. District Court Judge, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Attorney, U.S. Pretrial and Probation Office, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Attorney's Office, Federal Protective Service, and other guests.
Turning of the Shovel	Chief Judge Mangiona, Master of Ceremony Bo T. Palacios, U.S. District Court Judge, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Attorney, U.S. Pretrial and Probation Office, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Attorney's Office, Federal Protective Service, and other guests.
Prayer and Blessing	Rev. Dr. Walter Paul
Groundbreaking	Chief Judge Mangiona, Master of Ceremony Bo T. Palacios, U.S. District Court Judge, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Attorney, U.S. Pretrial and Probation Office, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Attorney's Office, Federal Protective Service, and other guests.
Closing Remarks	Don't Know



CONSTRUCTION FORGES AHEAD DESPITE SUPER TYPHOON YUTU IN OCTOBER 2018 AND THE PANDEMIC IN 2020



THE CNMI'S FIRST LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) BUILDING

- 35,696 square feet
- Constructed from December 2017 to June 2020
- U.S. District Court with one courtroom, two judges' chambers, a grand jury room, a jury assembly room, and an Office of the Clerk of Court
- U.S. Attorneys Office
- U.S. Marshals Service Office
- U.S. Pretrial and Probation Office
- Federal Protective Service

Left: In June 2020, GSA Local Project Manager Rodney Brickey officially turns over the courthouse key to Chief Judge Ramona V. Mangiona. Shown are, from left, Chief Deputy Clerk William Bezzant, Magistrate Judge/Clerk of Court Heather L. Kennedy, Chief Judge Mangiona, Brickey, IT Systems Manager Glenn Mendoza and Court Architect Walter Popen.

DISTRICT CONFERENCE



The District Court Conference was held on September 17, 2022 at the Kensington Hotel. The conference is held annually, but like the ribbon-cutting ceremony, was on a hiatus due to the pandemic. This year's conference was well attended with justices and judges from various jurisdictions across the Pacific and many CNMI and Guam Bar members.



This year's theme "Keeping You Safe Since 1978" is an homage to the District Court's 44-years existence and technological advances in security and legal tools. The conference featured topics ranging from management of electronically-stored information to a primer on cryptocurrency and blockchain to online security tips.

KEEPING YOU SAFE SINCE 1978



INAUGURAL ALEX R. MUNSON PROFESSIONALISM AWARD

In honor of Senior Judge Munson's legacy of legal professionalism and courtesy, Chief Judge Manglona presented the first ever Alex R. Munson Professionalism Award at the 2022 District Conference.

The Award's first recipient is the late William M. Fitzgerald. Attorney Fitzgerald was part of the Micronesian legal community since the mid-1970s. In presenting the Award, Chief Judge Manglona noted that the legal profession "was his calling. Whether you were a judge, adversary, or co-counsel, if you cared about the law—even when your conclusions were different—you were someone he respected, and often times he became your friend." Mr. Fitzgerald's Award was received by Lilly Celis, and Noriyasu Horiguchi (his long-time support staff), and Attorney Bruce Berline (his friend and colleague). Attorney Fitzgerald learned about his award before he passed away.



Remembering the late

William M. Fitzgerald

"THE LEGAL PROFESSION WAS HIS CALLING. WHETHER YOU WERE A JUDGE, ADVERSARY, OR CO-COUNSEL, IF YOU CARED ABOUT THE LAW—EVEN WHEN YOUR CONCLUSIONS WERE DIFFERENT—YOU WERE SOMEONE HE RESPECTED, AND OFTEN TIMES HE BECAME YOUR FRIEND."

-CHIEF JUDGE MANGLONA



POWER ACT: THE NEED FOR PRO BONO SERVICES

The POWER Act, the acronym for the “Pro bono Work to Empower and Represent Act of 2018,” is a federal statute passed by Congress intended to address disturbingly high rates of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking across the country by encouraging pro bono legal assistance to empower survivors of these crimes.

The POWER Act requires the chief district judge in each district to lead at least one public event, “in partnership with a State, local, tribal, or territorial domestic violence service provider or coalition and a State or local volunteer lawyer project, promoting pro bono legal services as a critical way in which to empower survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, and engage citizens in assisting those survivors.”

The 2022 District Court Conference included a video presentation highlighting various service providers including Karidat (a faith-based organization helping those experiencing economic hardship or domestic violence) and private attorneys who have provided pro bono legal services. After the video, Jane Mack, Directing Attorney for Micronesia Legal Services Corporation, addressed common issues confronted by her clients and the continued need for pro bono legal services in the CNMI.

ANNUAL DISTRICT CONFERENCE SCHEDULE	
7:30 AM – 8:00 AM	Registration and Seating
8:00 AM – 8:30 AM	Welcoming Remarks and Reports <i>Master of Ceremony:</i> Vincent J. Seman, Esq., Ninth Circuit Lawyer Representative Welcoming Remarks and State of the District Court The Honorable Ramona V. Mangiona, Chief Judge, District Court for the NMI State of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals The Honorable Richard R. Clifton, Circuit Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit State of the CNMI Bar Association Charity R. Hodson, Esq., President Report of the Criminal Justice Act Panel Bruce L. Berline, Esq., Chair and CJA Resource Counsel
8:30 AM – 9:15 AM	A Conversation with Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs Carmen G. Cantor <i>Moderator:</i> Nicole Torres-Ripple, Esq.
9:15 AM – 9:30 AM	Group Photo and Break
9:30 AM – 10:45 AM	Electronically Stored Information (ESI), e-Discovery and Evidence Sean Broderick <i>National Litigation Support Administrator, Defender Service</i>
10:45 AM – 11:45 PM	Appellate Court Viewpoints and the Do's and Don'ts of Appellate Practice <i>Moderator:</i> Gretchen Smith, Law Clerk to the Honorable Ramona V. Mangiona The Honorable Richard R. Clifton, <i>Circuit Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit</i> ; The Honorable John A. Mangiona, <i>Associate Justice, NMI Supreme Court</i> ; and Brianna Mircheff, <i>Chief, Los Angeles Federal Public Defender Office Appellate Division</i>
11:45 AM – 12:45 PM	Luncheon POWER Act Video Presentation The Honorable Heather L. Kennedy, <i>Magistrate Judge, U.S. District Court for the NMI</i> Need for Pro Bono Representation Jane Mack, Esq., <i>Directing Attorney, Micronesia Legal Services Corporation</i>
12:45 PM – 1:45 PM	A Conversation with the Honorable Alex R. Munson, Senior Judge, U.S. District Court for the NMI <i>Moderators:</i> Robert T. Torres, Esq. and Sean E. Frink, Esq.
A POWER Act video presentation was part of the District Conference Schedule.	
<i>Moderator:</i> The Honorable Daniel P. Collins, <i>Bankruptcy Judge, U.S. District Court of Arizona</i> Bryce A. Suzuki, Esq., <i>Snell & Wilmer</i> , and Paul Hemesath, Esq., <i>Counsel to the Digital Currency Initiative, U.S. Dept. of Justice</i>	
3:15 PM -3:30 PM	Break
3:30 PM -4:45 PM	Cybersecurity Reggie Gallour, <i>Circuit Information Security Officer</i> , and Jarrod Frilot, <i>Ninth Circuit IT Security Analyst</i>
5:00 PM – 7:00 PM	No Host Social at OHAS, Kensington Hotel

The POWER Act video can be viewed online on the court's website. Scan QR code.




The Pro bono Work to Empower and Represent Act of 2018 also known as the POWER Act.

One Hundred Fifteenth Congress
of the
United States of America
AT THE SECOND SESSION
*Began and held at the City of Washington on Wednesday,
the third day of January, two thousand and eighteen*

An Act
to provide for pro bono legal services as a critical way in which to empower survivors of domestic violence.
Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
SHORT TITLE.
This Act may be cited as the “Pro bono Work to Empower and Represent Act of 2018” or the “POWER Act”.
SEC. 2. FINDINGS.
Congress finds the following:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

In November 2022, Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona accepted the framed copy of Congressman Gregorio Kilili Sablan's statement in the Congressional Record marking the opening of the new United States District Court building in the Marianas. Also present was Guam's Chief Judge Frances M. Tydingco-Gatewood (right).



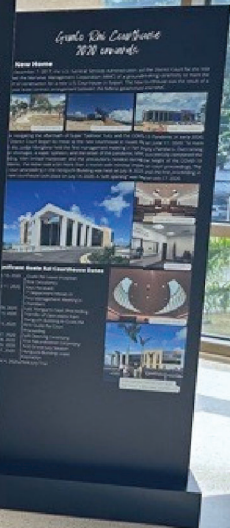
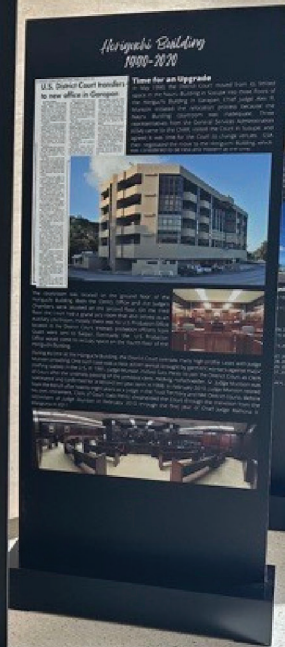
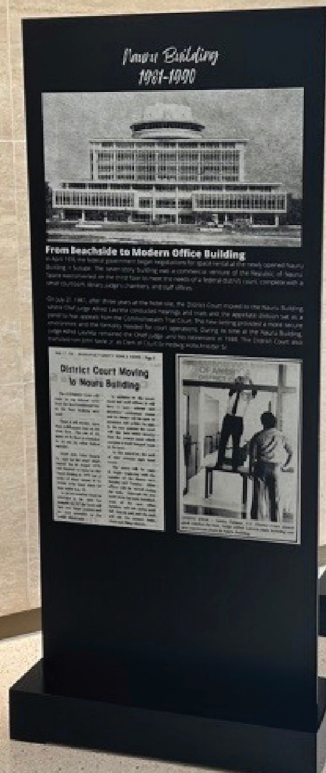
The Congressional Record statement memorializes the history of the Marianas Federal Court and those who have worked there, serving the cause of justice.

"The new courthouse and federal office building we are celebrating today is a far cry from quarters that Judge Laureta confronted, when he arrived on the island of Saipan in the Marianas in August of 1978...."

CONGRESSMAN GREGORIO KILILI SABLAN

"Throughout the last four decades, the U.S. District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands and the U.S. judicial system have played a pivotal role in the life of our community."

CONGRESSMAN GREGORIO KILILI SABLAN



A historical timeline is now on public display in the halls outside of the 3rd Floor Courtroom. The visual aid chronicles the District Court from its humble beginnings of a pool suite at the Saipan Beach Intercontinental Inn to the long time occupied Horiguchi Building in Garapan, and finally the U.S. Courthouse in Gualo Rai.

LEGAL RESEARCH TRAINING CIRCUIT LIBRARIAN VISIT

On August 16, 2022, the District Court hosted a Legal Research Training with Ninth Circuit Digital Services Librarian Shannon Lashbrook and Ninth Circuit Librarian Pete Gayatinea.

The three part training focused on the latest updates on Lexis and Westlaw Edge legal research platforms and databases, as well as an overview of Westlaw's Drafting Assistant feature.



CJA TRAINING

In July 2022, the District Court hosted the Criminal Justice Act (CJA) Panel Member training workshop with Francisco Celedonio Esq., CJA Supervising Attorney for the Districts of Hawaii, Guam and NMI; and Sean Broderick, National Litigation Support Administrator with the Federal Public Defender. The workshop focused on Electronically Stored Information (ESI) data with both new and seasoned CJA panel members.



L-R: Chris Mantanona (IT, Guam Federal Public Defender), Robert Torres, Janet King, Steve Pixley, Richard Miller, Joe McDoulett, presenters Sean Broderick (National Litigation Support Administrator, Defender Services Office, Training Division), and Francisco Celedonio (CJA Supervising Attorney, Districts of Hawai'i, Guam and NMI).

NATURALIZATION CEREMONIES

In 2022, the District Court held 18 naturalization ceremonies and swore in 317 individuals as new citizens from 16 countries and from American Samoa. They came from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Canada, China, French Polynesia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Palau, the Philippines, Russia, Samoa, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Ukraine.



January 2022
Ceremony with guest speaker Gretchen Smith, Chambers Law Clerk to Chief Judge Manglona.



April 2022
Ceremony with Chief Judge Manglona.



February 2022
Ceremony with guest speaker 2022 CNMI Teacher of the Year Dr. Riya Nathrani.



May 2022
Ceremony with guest speaker Assistant U. S. Attorney and Lieutenant Colonel U.S. Marine Corps Albert Flores Jr.



March 2022
Ceremony with guest speaker U.S. Army Colonel Jennifer P. Fischer.



June 2022 Ceremony
with guest speaker Mr. Lytton Powell, School Principal, Seventh Day Adventist School.



Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona with Guest Speaker Michigan National Guard Colonel Jennifer P. Fischer wearing traditional mwar or flower crowns to celebrate Covenant Day and Women's Month in March 2022.



July 2022 Ceremony
with guest speaker Mr. Michael S. Sablan, Civilian Aid to the Secretary of the Army.

CELEBRATING CITIZENSHIP



August 2022 Ceremony
with guest speaker Lieutenant Commander
Christine T. Igisomar,
Maritime Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard Forces.



November 2022 Ceremony
with guest speaker attorney Joe McDoulett of
Veteran of Foreign Wars, an organization assisting veterans
engaging in community service.



December 2022
with guest speaker Sergeant Major Richard Basa
United States Army. Basa serves as a JROTC Supervisor at
Saipan Southern High School.



September 2022 Ceremonies
with guest speakers Maisie B. Tenorio, Northern Marianas Coalition
Against Domestic & Sexual Violence Executive Director, and Catherine
Attao, Vice President for Tan Holdings Corp.



October 2022 Ceremony
with guest speaker Mrs. Emma Perez of 500 Sails, a non-profit
organization promoting maritime cultural traditions in the
Marianas.

2022 Guest Speakers

- Chambers Law Clerk Gretchen Smith
- CNMI PSS Teacher Dr. Riya Nathrani
- U.S. Army Colonel Jennifer Fischer
- Assistant U.S. Attorney, Lieutenant Colonel U.S. Marine Corps Albert Flores Jr.,
- U.S. Air Force Veteran Stanley Iakopo
- Pastor Lilton Powell
- Civilian Aid to Secretary of the Army Michael Sablan
- Lieutenant Commander Christine T. Igisomar, Maritime Advisor for the U.S. Coast Guard
- NMCADSV Executive Director Maisie B. Tenorio
- Tan Holdings Corporation Vice President Catherine Attao
- 500 Sails Director Emma Perez
- Attorney Joe McDoulett, Veteran of Foreign Wars
- U.S. Army Sergeant Major (Ret.) Richard Basa

NINTH CIRCUIT CIVICS CONTEST

THE FIRST AMENDMENT: STUDENTS' FREE SPEECH RIGHTS

ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS

The Ninth Circuit Civics Contest is an essay and video contest for high school students in the western United States, NMI, and Guam jurisdictions. This year's theme focused on The First Amendment and the Schoolhouse Gate: Students' Free Speech Rights. Students were invited to submit creative and thoughtful videos and essays capturing the theme. The contest challenged students to address "What are students' free speech rights – and responsibilities – on and off campus?"

The CNMI submitted a total of 5 videos and 88 essays ranging between 500 to 1,000 words in length to the Ninth Circuit. The essays were returned to the NMI District Court without any name or school identifiers to be judged solely on the students' understanding of constitutional principles, clarity and effectiveness in expressing the theme, grammar, spelling, and composition, and use of footnotes and bibliographies properly attributing information taken from other sources.

Essay Contest Winners:

First Place

John Lawrence Apit
Marianas High School

Second Place

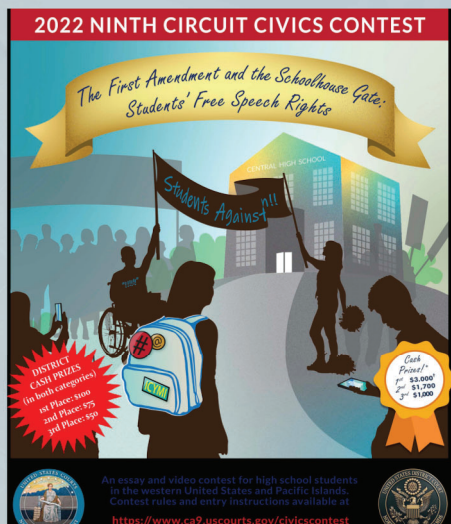
Jenny Min
Marianas High School

Third Place

Samantha Flores
Marianas High School



MHS teacher Ashley Beck, Samantha Flores, and John Apit with Chief Judge Manglona.



The 2022 flyer featuring the contest theme "The First Amendment and the Schoolhouse Gate – Students' Free Speech Rights"

THE FIRST AMENDMENT: STUDENTS' FREE SPEECH RIGHTS

VIDEO CONTEST WINNERS

First Place
Wendy Zha
Marianas High School

Second Place
Amena Mahmud
Marianas High School

Third Place
Grace Ju
Marianas High School



Winners for the 2022 Ninth Circuit Contest and Law Day Photo Contest pose for a group photo. Front Row L-R: Samantha Flores, John Lawrence Apit, Yu Rong Jiang, Tyler Camacho, and Grace Ju. Back Row L-R: Xinyi Ni, Wendy Zha, Amena Mahmud, Seongeon Heo, and Grace Kim.

Apit 1

John Lawrence Apit
Ms. Ashley Beck
AP English Language and Composition
15 March 2022

The First Amendment and the Schoolhouse Gate: Student's Free Speech Rights

Many years ago, our Founding Fathers created the Constitution to ensure a successful democracy within the nation. The First Amendment allows every American the opportunity to express their individual ideas regardless of their age, race, gender, etc. *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District*, 393 U.S. 503 (1969) shaped students' free speech rights into what it is today. This particular case was the first of its kind to make it into the Supreme Court, which in turn laid the groundwork for the future. The decision influenced many other court cases because it specified the exact rights and responsibilities of students' free speech. As a result, students can now express their beliefs through words or peaceful protests. Unless the conduct in question would "materially and substantially interfere" with the school's environment, school officials are prohibited from suppressing a student's First Amendment right. The schools and government should continue to prioritize the cultivation of free speech, except for instances where disruption can occur.

For instance, the *Mahanoy Area School Dist. v. B.L.*, 594 U.S. (2021) case poses a new challenge for Supreme Court justices to overcome. Social media's prominence gives citizens an outlet to be outspoken now more than ever before. Even if their opinions may be unpopular,

The winning essay about the first amendment and student's free speech rights.



First place winner Wendy Zha's video

The 2022 first place essay and video can be viewed on the Court's website. Scan QR code.



SECOND ANNUAL LAW DAY PHOTO CONTEST

In May 2022, the District Court held its Second Annual Law Day Photo Contest.

Law Day is celebrated nationally on May 1st each year to recognize the rule of law. Law Day underscores how the law and legal process have contributed to the freedoms that we all enjoy.

The 2022 Law Day theme "Toward a More Perfect Union, The Constitution in Times of Change." The Contest was open to all public and private school students in the CNMI in Grades 6-12. The photo submissions were required to reflect the theme and include a brief description on how the photo represents the theme. Photos were judged according to originality, creativity, and accurate representation of the theme.



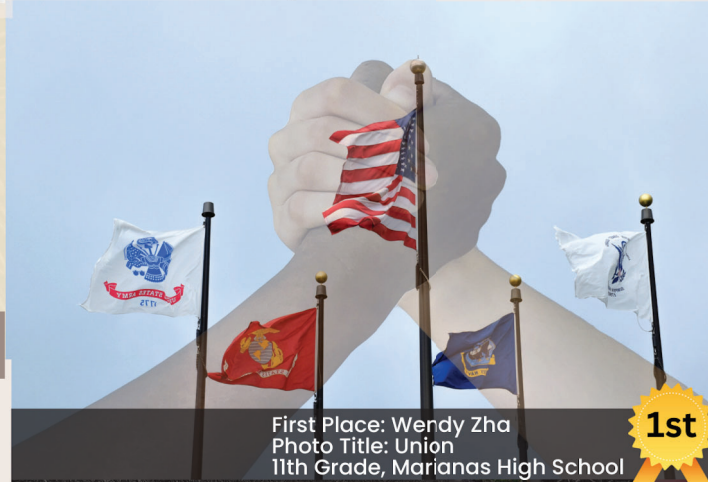
Let's recognize the importance of law in our society through the eyes of our students.



LAW DAY 2022 PHOTO CONTEST

High School Winners

"The Constitution ensures a country's functioning, guarantees every citizen's rights, and establishes appropriate limits. It enables citizens to unite and cooperate to make society a better place. Social change is inseparable from everyone's effort. The clasped hands in the picture represent the determination and commitment of every citizen to create constructive social changes. Today's society, represented by the American flag in the center of the hands in the image, cannot flourish without every citizen's contribution, while the constitution is the cornerstone." -Wendy Zha



First Place: Wendy Zha
Photo Title: Union
11th Grade, Marianas High School

1st

Middle School Winners

"To dissent is to withhold assent or approval. Justice Ginsburg is a person that my auntie really respected because of her interpretation of the constitution and support of gender equality. Justice Ginsburg also became a pop culture icon before she died in 2020. Whenever she did not agree with the Supreme Court's ruling, she wore a collar to show her disagreement. She was a change maker, and this photo is a tribute to the Constitution in times of change" -Tyler Camacho

First Place: Tyler Camacho
7th Grade
Chacha Oceanview Middle School
Photo Title: I Dissent

1st



Second Place: Yu Rong Jiang
7th Grade F. Sablan Middle School
Photo Title: Grateful to be in American Soil

2nd



"Toward a More Perfect Union:
The Constitution in Times of Change."

Second Place: Xinyi Ni
Photo Title: Expressing Our Views
11th Grade, Kagman High School

2nd



Third Place: Amena Mahmud
Photo Title: District Court at Dusk
11th Grade, Marianas High School

3rd

READ ALOUD WITH THE JUDGES

In May 2022, Chief Judge Manglona and Magistrate Judge Kennedy held their Second Annual Read Aloud with the Judges event in partnership with the Joeten Kiyu Public Library.

Unlike the virtual read aloud in 2021, this year's read aloud was held in person as the library resumed their Saturday read aloud program.



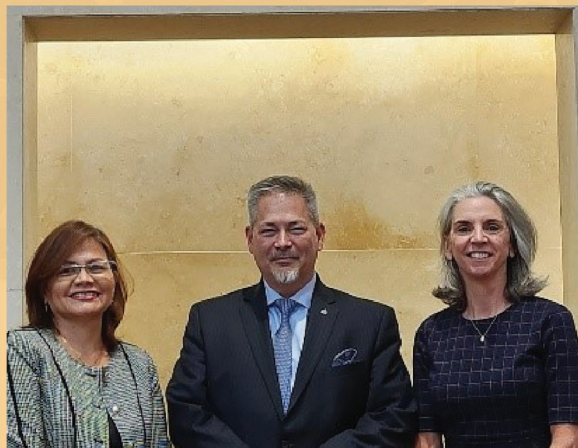
COURTHOUSE TOURS

In 2022, there was an increased interest from the community to visit and tour the U.S. Courthouse. Since it publicly opened, there have been many tour requests. Interested participants submit a request form online. The guided tours may include visits to the U.S. Probation Office, the Law Library, the Second Floor Courtroom, the Clerk's Office, the Magistrate Judge/Visiting Judge's Chambers, the Third Floor Courtroom, and the Chief District Judge's Chambers, among other courthouse spaces. The Federal Court anticipates hosting more tours in the future. For more information, visit the District Court's website at:

https://www.nmid.uscourts.gov/forms/tour_request.pdf



Chief Judge Manglona joined Designated Judge Frances M. Tydingco-Gatewood (second from right) after her first in-person proceeding in the Settlement Fund case was held in the new courthouse. (L-R) Bankruptcy Judge Daniel P. Collins (D. Ariz), Dean A. Manglona, Lillian M. Pangelinan, Nicole M. Torres-Ripple, NMI Settlement Fund Trustee Joyce Tang, Chief Judge Manglona, Chief Judge Tydingco-Gatewood, and investment advisor Maggie Ralbovsky.

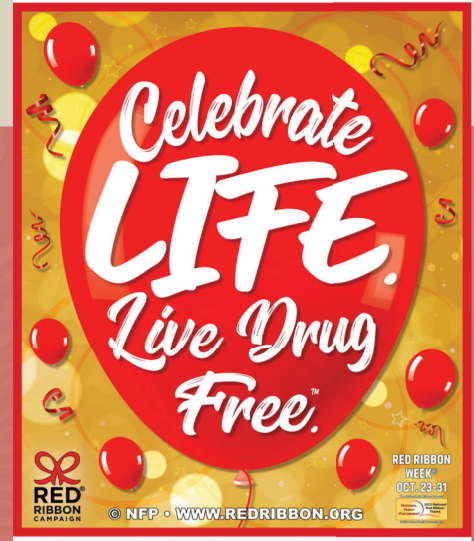


Chief Judge Manglona, Dan McElroy, Chief of Judiciary Security Operations, U.S. Courts Administrative Office, and Magistrate Judge Kennedy.



RED RIBBON WEEK SCHOOL OUTREACH

The District Court, the U.S. Attorney's Office, U.S. Probation Office, and the Drug Enforcement Administration celebrated Red Ribbon Week, the nation's largest and oldest anti-drug campaign celebrated annually from October 23-31. The committee encouraged schools across the Marianas to celebrate Red Ribbon Week, and conducted in-person and virtual outreach presentations to schools in Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.



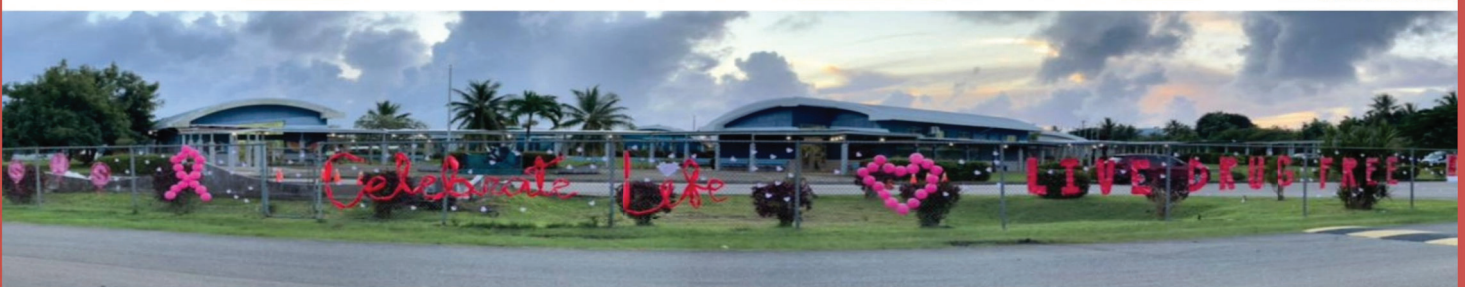
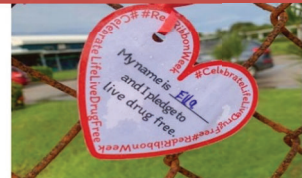
RED RIBBON WEEK WALL/GATE CONTEST

In celebration of Red Ribbon Week, the District Court held its annual Red Ribbon Week Wall/Gate Decorating Contest. Nine schools from across the CNMI entered the contest and showed their artistic and creative ideas.



Students from Saipan Southern High School's STUCO and Art Club gather with Magistrate Judge Kennedy, Chief Judge Manglona, U.S. Attorney Shawn Anderson, Office of the CNMI Governor's Substance Abuse Program Coordinator Tara Namauleg, U.S. Probation Officer Greg Arriola, and the District Court's outreach coordinator Daniel Brown.

1ST PLACE - SAIPAN SOUTHERN HIGH SCHOOL

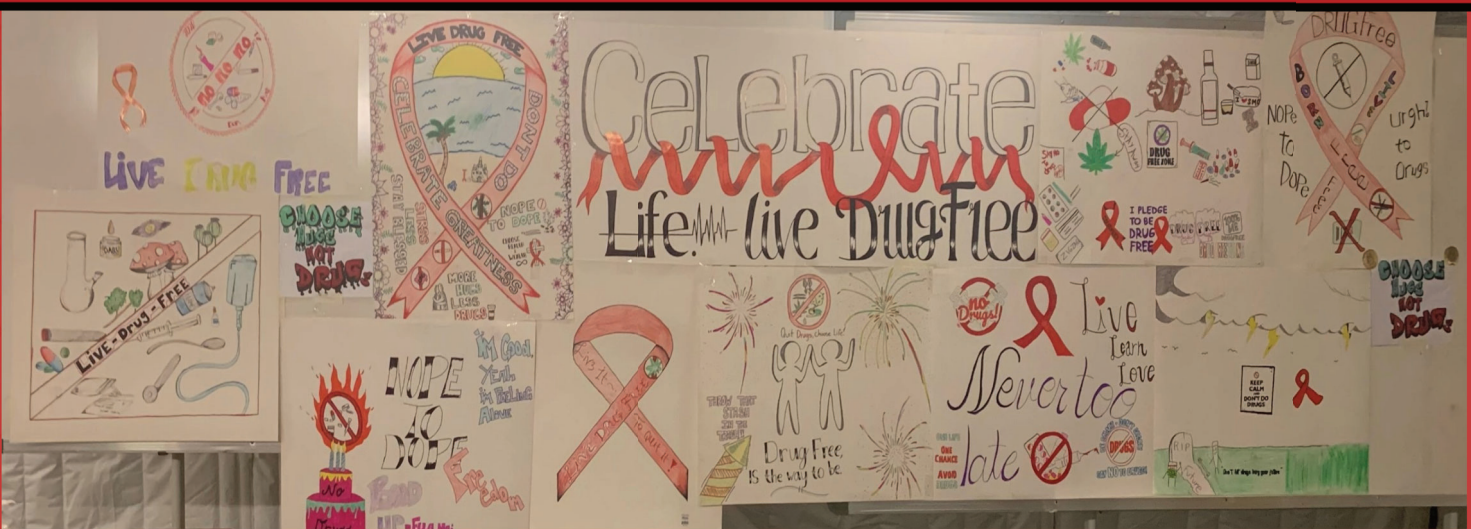


RED RIBBON WEEK WALL/GATE CONTEST

2ND PLACE - KOBLERVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



3RD PLACE - DA'OK ACADEMY



WOMEN'S MONTH

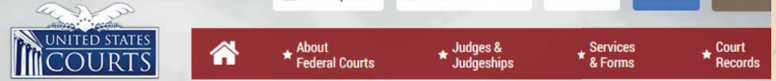
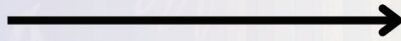
AO Women's History Month Publication

In March 2022, the Administrative Office of the United States Courts (AO) published "Chief Judge Ramona Manglona: A Trailblazer for Women in the Law" as part of their annual heritage celebration of Women's History Month.

The publication featured a new video profile that explores Chief Judge Manglona's perseverance in pursuing a career in law. She reflects on the challenges her parents faced raising 12 children on Saipan, and credits them with instilling in her a strong work ethic.

In their publication, the Administrative Office of the United States Courts recognized how Chief Judge is "the first in her family to graduate from a four-year college, is the first indigenous woman to pass the local bar exam and the first and only woman district judge for the U.S. District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands."

Scan the QR code to see the AO publication and video profile.



News

Chief Judge Ramona Manglona: A Trailblazer for Women in the Law

Judiciary News

★ Chief Judge Ramona Manglona: A Trailblazer for Women in the Law

Published on March 10, 2022

Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona was born into a large family on the island of Saipan in the Northern Mariana Islands, about 4,000 miles from Hawaii. At the age of 12, she left home to further her education on the U.S. mainland. After earning a law degree, she returned to the island to help the people in the community where she grew up. Today, Manglona leads the U.S. District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands.



WOMEN'S MONTH

2022 NMI WOMEN'S RUN 10K

Chief Judge Manglona and Chambers Law Clerk Jenny Chhea participated in the Second Annual NMI Womens 10K Run along with more than 100 women participants.

The 6.2 mile course began at the Hyatt Regency Saipan in Garapan and was charted southbound to the turn around point at Pacific Islands Club Saipan in San Antonio with the finish setup near American Memorial Park and Hyatt Regency Saipan.

Jenny Chhea completed the run with a time of 54:55 Chief Judge Manglona completed the run with a time of 1:16:04.



HOPE AND RECOVERY

Former Drug Offender Vicente A. Sablan Living Drug Free

The first time that Chief Judge Manglona met Vicente Aldan Sablan, aka Ben Seven, was when she was on the bench and he was brought before her by the U.S. Marshals for his initial appearance in court. He was arrested pursuant to an arrest warrant that she signed for the charge of conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine. That was ten years prior, in 2012. Ben subsequently cooperated with the U.S. government and entered a guilty plea to the charge, and testified against his co-defendant, a Department of Corrections officer at the time of the offense.

After serving his prison sentence, Ben struggled to overcome his drug addiction and maintain his sobriety. His supervised release was revoked several times before he joined the District Court's newly established Drug Offender Re-entry Program ("DORE") in 2016. Unfortunately, Ben was not able to graduate and was instead terminated from the program in 2017 and placed back on regular supervision. He again violated his conditions, had his sentence revoked, and ended up serving more prison time.

In late 2019, Ben continued to use illicit substances and was charged locally for dealing drugs. He faced another revocation hearing, and this time, the probation officer recommended the maximum available sentence of 16 months, 25 days imprisonment, with no supervision to follow. The probation officer noted in the last petition that Ben was accepted into the CNMI Superior Court's Drug Court Program despite his long history of noncompliance with the District Court's DORE Program.

The hearing on the last petition to revoke Ben's supervised release was held virtually in May 2020, because it was at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the end, rather than accepting the recommendation to impose the maximum sentence, Judge Manglona sentenced Ben to 25 days, placed him back on supervised release, and gave him a stern warning, as well as encouraged him to overcome his addiction through the local court's drug court program. Ben knew the 16 months imprisonment would be waiting for him if he failed again.

Ben was able to maintain his sobriety for about two years, and successfully graduated from the Drug Court program in 2021. He was tasked to personally invite one or two people to witness him graduate, and he chose to invite Chief Judge Manglona and Magistrate Judge Kennedy, who gladly attended his graduation.

On January 5, 2022, Judge Manglona discharged Ben from supervised release and closed his case. The following month, after verifying that Ben no longer had any active cases in either federal or local court, she invited Ben to visit her at the new courthouse.



Chief Judge Manglona and Mr. Vicente Sablan during his visit in Chambers at the new courthouse in Gualo Rai, Saipan on February 28, 2022.



From left to right: Chief Judge Manglona, Magistrate Judge Kennedy, Mr. Vicente Sablan, CNMI Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa K. Kim-Tenorio, and U.S. Probation Officer Gregory P. Arriola at the CNMI Drug Court graduation ceremony held at the CNMI Judiciary Guma' Hustisia in Susupe, Saipan on July 8, 2021.

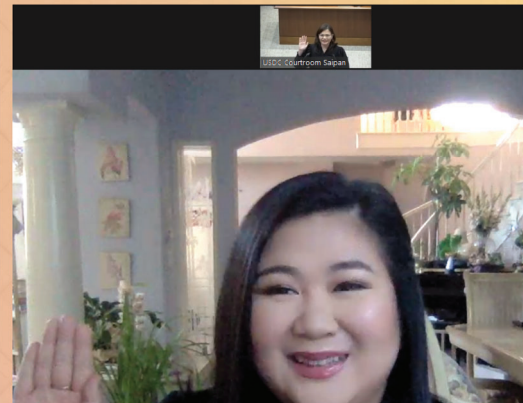
COURT STAFF HIGHLIGHTS



In January 2022, Courtroom Deputy Francine P. Atalig received her Five Years of Service Pin Award.



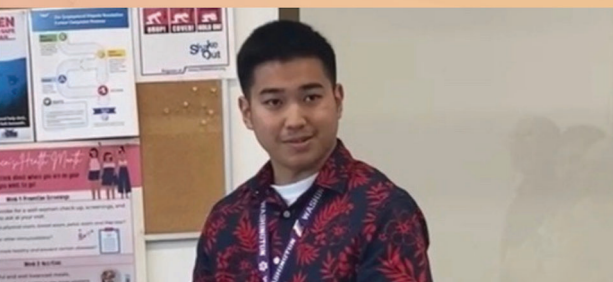
In February 2022, Designated Judge David O. Carter visited the new District Courthouse.



In April 2022, Chambers Law Clerk Pamela Huynh was sworn in virtually by Chief Judge Manglona.



In April 2022, staff from the Clerk's Office, Chambers, and U.S. Probation Office celebrate the 2022 Administrative Professionals' Day Lunch at Aqua Resort Saipan.



In May 2022, CJ Bermudes Jr. was recognized for his one-year service as the District Court's student intern for the Model Intern Diversity Pilot Program.



In July 2022, Chief Judge Manglona and Magistrate Judge Kennedy celebrated with Clerk's Office staff Lallane Guiao-Seng and Daniel Brown, and student intern Emma Timmons for their completion of the 2022 CNMI Judiciary Pre-Law Program.

COURT STAFF HIGHLIGHTS



Former Clerk of Court Galo Perez and his wife Lou Perez with Chief Deputy Clerk Bill Bezzant gather with the 2022 Clerk's Office Special Achievement Award Recipients: IT Systems Manager Glenn Mendoza, Financial Administrator Michelle Macaranas, Operations Supervisor Timothy V. Wesley, and Chambers Judicial Administrator Amanda Hayes.

"Whatever You choose to do, leave tracks. That means don't do it just for yourself. You will want to leave the world for a little better for your having lived."

-U.S. SUPREME COURT JUSTICE RUTH BADER GINSBURG



In August 2022, the Court held a farewell for Jenny Chhea after she completed her term as a Chambers Law Clerk. She returned to Los Angeles, CA to work for the State of California.



In September 2022, Senior Judge Alex R. Munson served as a speaker at the Court's Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and the District Conference.



In October 2022, the Court held a farewell for Lallane Guiao-Seng who relocated to Connecticut to pursue a law degree.

RANDY SCHMIDT MEMORIAL AWARD



Information Systems Manager, Glenn Mendoza, was awarded the Randy Schmidt Memorial Award for his significant contributions to the District Court, embodiment of a team player, and demonstration of the attributes of the late Randy Schmidt including thoughtfulness, resourcefulness, charm, and generosity.

This award commemorates Randy Schmidt's significant contributions to the District Court and his embodiment of a team player. Randy Schmidt worked for the District Court for more than 20 years as the career law clerk to Chief Judge Alex R. Munson. Randy was a thoughtful lawyer, and a great legal researcher and writer. Judge Munson recalls, "Randy was a perfect gentleman in the classical sense of the word. He had a great sense of humor and almost daily cracked me up with his lightning fast repartee, one liners and puns." Randy's quick wit entertained the entire staff of the Court. Most of all, Randy is remembered as an extremely generous man who helped his co-workers both at home and at work. Employees demonstrating Randy's attributes will be considered for this award. Employee must show a disposition and commitment to working harmoniously with fellow employees and the public to achieve a desired goal without regard to individual needs and/or a significant sacrifice of one's own interest and welfare for the benefit of co-workers, the Court, or the community.

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

1. NextGen staff training and implementation
2. First Aid/CPR/AED Certification with U.S. Marshals
3. Asian American Pacific Islander Cultural Professional Development Workshop
4. U.S. Marshals Service Security Awareness Training
5. Pacific Judicial Council (PJC)/CNMI Judiciary Emotional Quotient Training
6. NOAA Storm Spotting Presentation

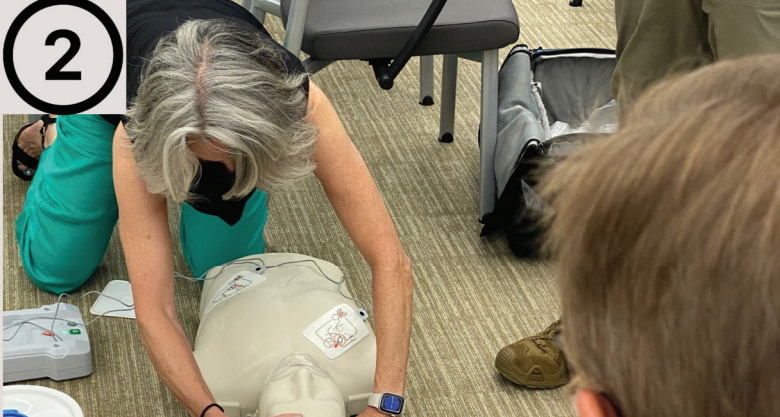
- Other/Virtual trainings held in 2022**
- Online Employee Dispute Resolution Training
 - Pay.gov training and implementation
 - PJC Mediation Conference



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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CELEBRATIONS

- 1. Marianas High School National Honor Society Induction
- 2. Start Smart Seminar with Northern Marianas College
- 3. Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month Potluck

- 4. Criminal Justice Act Interpreter Appreciation Luncheon
- 5. Court Family Thanksgiving Lunch
- 6. Holiday Employee Appreciation
- 7. Holiday Caroling with Marianas High School Rhythm & Glee Choir



U.S. PROBATION & PRETRIAL SERVICES STAFFING & TRAINING

Staffing

In December 2022, Roquel Cendana, our longest-term student intern in the Guam office, completed her internship and graduated with her Bachelor's in Criminal Justice and minor in Public Administration from the University of Guam (UOG). Roquel began as a volunteer in 2018 while she was attending Guam Community College (GCC). She was just interested in what U.S. Probation did and asked if she could volunteer. After she graduated from GCC, she began her studies at UOG and joined USPO as a student intern. She hopes to pursue a career in law enforcement and would one day like to join USPO as an officer. We will surely miss her!

Training

In late August 2022, Firearms Instructors Derek Kim and David Kahunahana, from the District of Hawaii, came to Guam for training to include community surveillance and firearms. All of the officers, including those from NMI and Guam, were able to participate in the weeklong activities. There was surveillance training, which consisted of both classroom instruction, as well as hands on training. Firearms training consisted of officer field safety, tactical pistol applications, and scenario based training exercises using non-lethal training ammunition.



U.S. PROBATION & PRETRIAL SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS

Training

In November 2022, Special Agent Erwin Fejeran from U.S. Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) conducted naloxone training. Naloxone is an “opioid antagonist” medication used to counter the effects of an opioid overdose, specifically fentanyl. Special Agent Fejeran trained the officers and staff to recognize the signs of an overdose and how to administer naloxone. While fentanyl is not widely seen on island, it has most recently been detected in administered drug tests. The officers will now be able to carry Naloxone out in the field to better protect themselves from possible exposure.



Personal Triumphs

While COVID may have slowed down some, others were able to use their time to pursue personal goals:

U.S. Probation Officer Jeffrey Ventura earned his Master of Science in Criminal Justice Studies from the Chaminade University of Honolulu with a perfect 4.0 grade point average. But this is no surprise to those of us who work with him because as a presentence writer he is able to go through reams of discovery and make sense of it all.



USPO Trina Duenas amazed us with her performance in the 2022 Marianas Open Brazilian JiuJitsu Tournament. She placed first in her division. Being in the number one spot is something that Officer Duenas strives for in all aspects - as the only pretrial services officer on Guam, she has helped the District earn first in the country with the timely filing of pretrial case plans.

Student Intern Roquel Cendana set some health goals for herself. She took hold of the 12 week body decomposition InBody Challenge and with gusto came in as the champion. She is registered again this year and hopes to retain her title. She also won 1st place for Tribe’s Body Recomposition Challenge.



U.S. PROBATION & PRETRIAL SERVICES EVENTS

EVENTS

In 2022, the Probation Office began conducting sentencing preparation informational sessions with pretrial clients awaiting sentencing. Defense counsel, defendants, and family members were invited to attend. Information was provided on the presentence investigation, the sentencing hearing, expectations at the Bureau of Prisons, and post-conviction supervision.

In September, an employee appreciation lunch was held recognizing the staff for their many years of service. Because of COVID, these sort of events went to the wayside and it was nice to gather once again to honor the dedication of a great team. Notably, Data Quality Analyst II Elaine Gagarin was recognized for 28 years, Deputy Chief Grace Flores for 25 years, USPO Specialist Melinda Santos for 23 years, Systems Manager Barbara Hattori for 26 years, Budget Analyst Frank Lizama for 23 years, and USPO Supervisor John San Nicolas for 21 years. The luncheon was extra special because both USDC Guam Chief Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood and USDC NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona were able to attend and present out employee service award pins.



Chief Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood for the District Court of Guam, Deputy Chief Probation Officer Grace Flores, and Chief Probation Officer Kim L. Walmsley. Deputy Chief Probation Officer Grace Flores was recognized for 25 years of service.



Data Quality Analyst II Elaine Gagarin was recognized for 25 years of service.

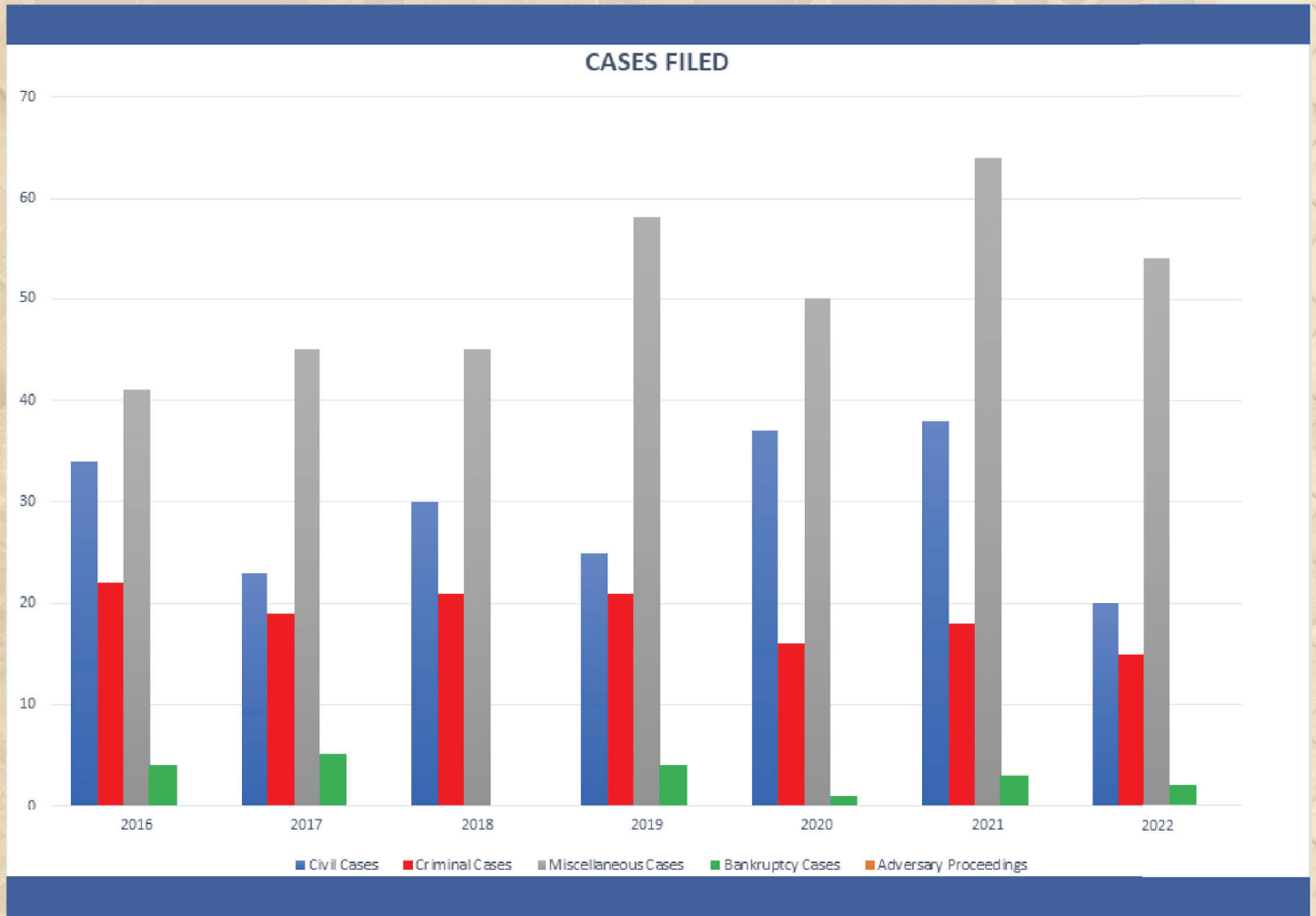


USPO Specialist Melinda Santos was recognized for 23 years of service.



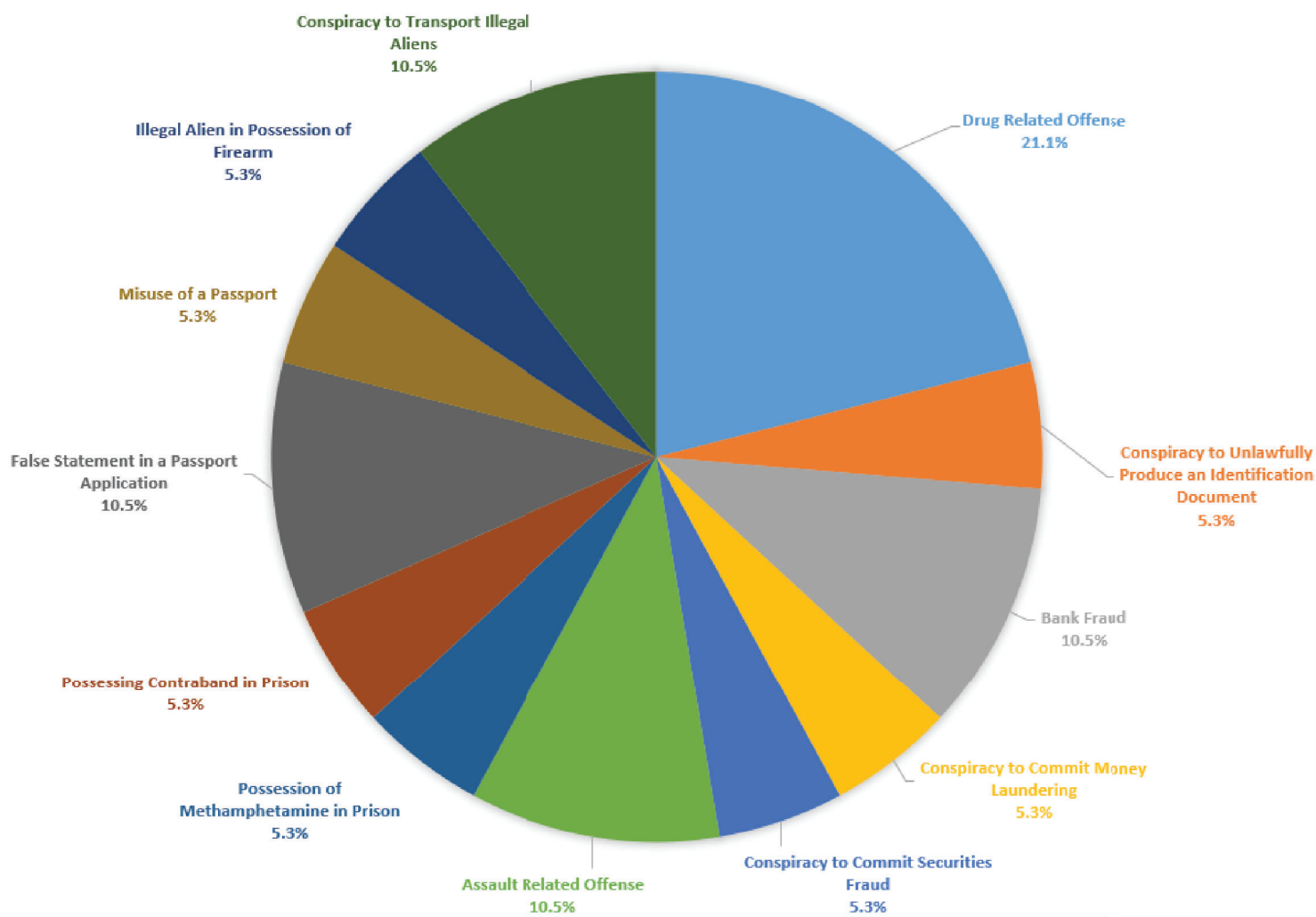
USPO Supervisor John San Nicolas was recognized for 21 years of service.

CASES FILED



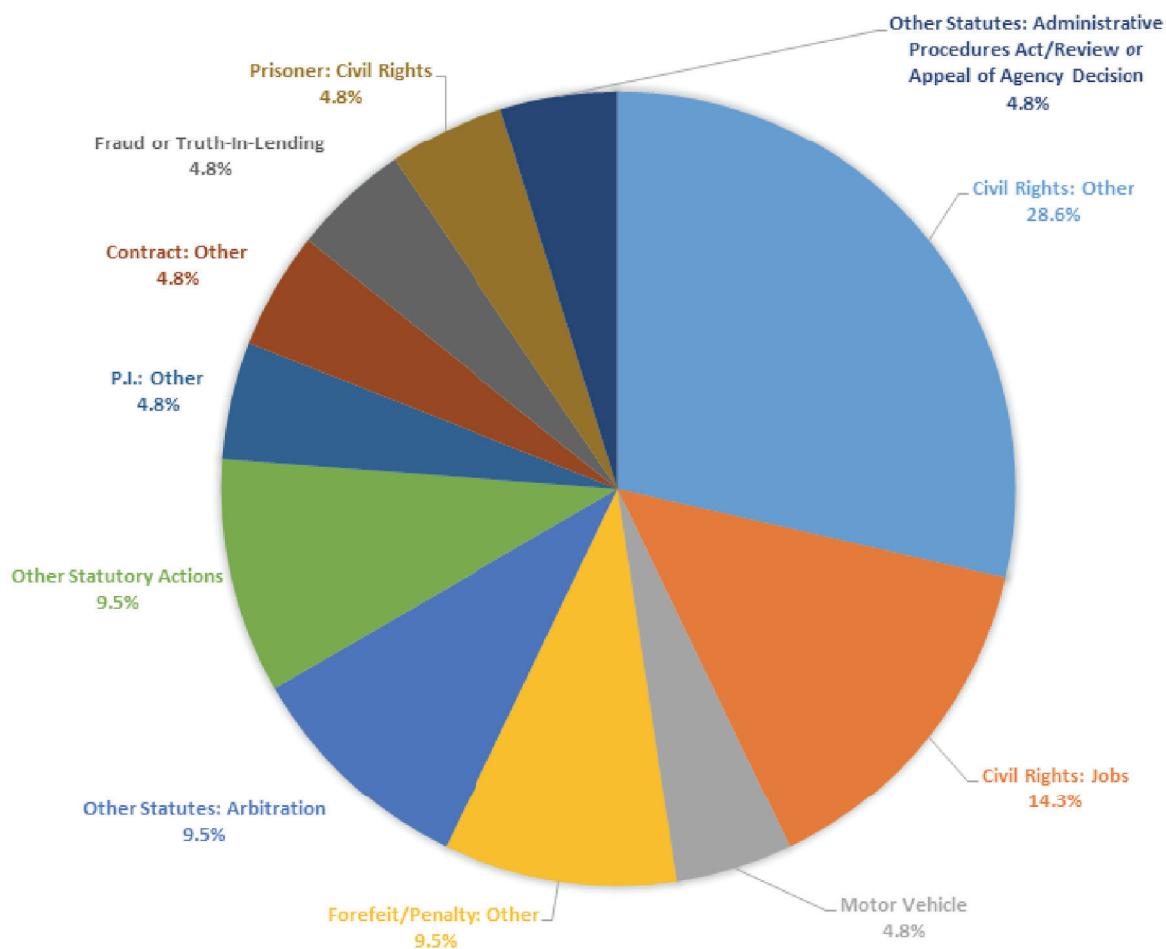
CRIMINAL CASE STATISTICS

2022 CRIMINAL CASES - NATURE OF SUIT



CIVIL CASE STATISTICS

2022 CIVIL CASES - NATURE OF SUIT







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