

NORTH CAROLINA Judicial COLLEGE

ANNUAL REPORT 2015–2016



Jeffrey B. Welty

MEET THE DIRECTOR

AS THE RELATIVELY new director of the North Carolina Judicial College, I am often asked what the Judicial College is and how it relates to the UNC School of Government. This seems like a good place to address those fundamental questions.

Ten years old, the Judicial College provides education and training for judicial officials, including judges, magistrates, and clerks of court. The curriculum includes training for new officials, continuing education seminars, and online offerings. For many North Carolina judicial officials, our courses combine with their annual conferences to comprise the bulk of their continuing education.

The Judicial College is part of the School of Government. Our administrative offices are at the School, and the faculty members who lead the Judicial College's

educational programs are School faculty members. At the same time, the Judicial College was created and funded to provide opportunities above and beyond the School's traditional offerings for court officials.

The Judicial College exists thanks to the efforts of many dedicated public servants. Jim Drennan, its founding director, deserves special mention, but many others in the court system, in the legislature, and at UNC were also critical to getting the Judicial College up and running. For the past several years, the Judicial College was ably led by Tom Thornburg, senior associate dean at the School of Government. This January, I began a five-year term as director of the Judicial College. I'm humbled by the responsibility, and I recognize that I'm standing on the shoulders of giants.

The School of Government has been working with judicial officials for decades, but we have never offered more training to more officials than we did this past year, and the quality of that training has never been better. I've created this new report—the first of many to come—to share more about our accomplishments in the past fiscal year.

You can be sure that we won't rest on our laurels. We've got new programs and offerings in the pipeline. To learn more, visit us online at judicialcollege.unc.edu, or contact my colleagues or me directly. We would love to hear from you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JB Welty'.

Jeffrey B. Welty

NC JUDICIAL COLLEGE
At a Glance
FY 2015–2016

25 Courses offered
572 Clients served
10,968 Credit hours awarded
9.84 (of 10) Average course evaluation



UNC
SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

Training the Court's Decision Makers



Jessica Smith

MANY SCHOOL FACULTY members, like Jessica Smith, coordinate and teach in the North Carolina Judicial College. Smith joined the School in 2000. Before that, she practiced law in Washington, DC, and clerked for Judge W. Earl Britt in the US District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina and for Judge J. Dickson Phillips Jr. in the US Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. At the School, Smith teaches and consults with judges and other public employees involved in the criminal justice system. In 2013, she was named a W.R. Kenan Jr. Distinguished Professor by the UNC chancellor. In 2015, Smith was appointed reporter for the Criminal Investigation and Adjudication Committee of Chief Justice Mark Martin's NC Commission on the Administration of Law and Justice, an independent, multidisciplinary commission that is undertaking a comprehensive evaluation of the NC judicial system and making recommendations for strengthening its courts.

What has surprised you in your work at the School?

JS: A few things. First, until I came here I'd never been around such a large group of people all dedicated—really dedicated—to public service. At the school I'm surrounded by colleagues all working toward the same goal: to make North Carolina even better. Second, I continue to be impressed with the dedication of North Carolina's public servants. Virtually all of the judicial officials I work with are striving to do what's fair and

right, in individual cases and for the system, often with incredibly limited resources. And finally, I'm still surprised that people actually seek me out for my opinion. When I first arrived, I'd hear the phone constantly ringing in a senior colleague's office and I'd think, "That will never be me." But time goes by. And I've done things. And I've learned things. And I've built relationships. And people call. I'm grateful that they trust me. I'm also thankful for the opportunity they give me to do exactly what I had hoped to do when I started my legal career: improve the justice system.

What has felt substantial/inspiring about your work here?

JS: Everything is constantly changing. The US Supreme Court issues new decisions. The NC Supreme Court issues new decisions. The General Assembly passes new laws. Senior judges retire and new judges take their place. And on top of all of that, technology and science change the way criminal cases are investigated and tried. It's never static, there is so much to do, and so much of it is important work.

What is your role with the NC Commission on the Administration of Law and Justice?

JS: Chief Justice Martin appointed me to serve as reporter for the commission's Criminal Committee. As reporter I've been working to facilitate the committee's work in four areas: juvenile justice, indigent defense, pretrial release, and criminal case management. My work as reporter has been wide-ranging and intensive. It has involved things like preparing briefing papers to help folks understand the issues, drafting comprehensive committee reports, finding experts to speak to the committee, and fielding questions from the media. It's been a while since North Carolina last took a comprehensive look at its court system. The commission is doing that. I'm grateful for the opportunity to participate in what I hope will be a major catalyst for improving how justice is administered in our court system.

To read the full interview with Jessica Smith, visit sog.unc.edu/about/news/faculty-spotlight-jessica-smith. To learn more about the NC Commission on the Administration of Law and Justice, visit nccalj.org.

SPOTLIGHT: Chief District Court Judge William G. Hamby Jr.

HOW DOES SOMEONE decide to become a judge? For Chief District Court Judge William Hamby, the path opened up at a young age.

When Hamby was just learning to read—at age seven—he read newsletters sent out by his congressman at the time. He would see the congressman at the county fair or the local post office just a few doors down from his home town in the mountains of North Carolina. “The more I read his newsletters and talked to him,” he said, “the more I became interested in how government works, how the branches work together, and how balances are put in place.”

Hamby graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill and was a middle school teacher in Laurinburg, North Carolina, when an experience with jury duty led him to apply to law school. At Wake Forest University, where he earned a JD, he was chair of the state’s College Republicans. He practiced law in Cabarrus County and was elected as a Cabarrus County commissioner, a role he served in for eight years.

As a lawyer, Hamby had experience in district court. “I saw the importance of the court,” he said, “particularly on family life and cases involving children and misdemeanor crime.” He decided to run for judge. “I felt I could have a positive impact on the community.”

In 1994, Hamby ran and was elected to a newly created seat as district court judge. He was appointed chief district court judge in 1998 and was most recently re-elected in 2014. During his time on the bench, he became a certified juvenile court judge and served terms as head of both the conference of Chief District Court Judges and the NC Association of District Court Judges and as judicial vice president of the North Carolina Bar Association.

“Being a district court judge is a good job for people who are patient and can sit and listen for long periods of time,” he said. “It requires a lot of difficult decisions. As an attorney, you know which side you’re on; that makes it easier. As a judge, you have to balance both sides.”

“Lawyers tend to be experts in particular areas,” said School of Government faculty member Jessica Smith. “Judges must be experts in everything. They need to fully and robustly understand all of the procedural and substantive law that applies to the litigation before them. This is no small task.”

That is one reason judges attend educational programs at the North Carolina Judicial College. Another is the administrative tasks that are added to the role of chief judges.



William G. Hamby Jr.

“As an attorney, you know which side you’re on; that makes it easier. As a judge, you have to balance both sides.”

Hamby has attended, and encourages every new chief district court judge to attend, the Judicial College’s Chief District Court Judge Leadership Training. Each year the course explores a particular aspect of leadership, such as communication, team building, strategic planning, or managing conflict. “It is invaluable to be able to get together with other judges in small settings,” he said. “It’s a forum for ideas and for exchanging information about our duties as both judges and administrators.”

“The School of Government courses in general have been vitally important to every public role I’ve served,” Hamby said.

To see a calendar of Judicial College classroom and online training events, visit sog.unc.edu/resources/microsites/north-carolina-judicial-college.

Notes from the Dean



Michael R. Smith

THE SCHOOL HAS just been through a year-long process of identifying priorities that will prepare us to be as successful as possible in the future. Our mission of improving the lives of North Carolinians by working to improve their government does not need to change. It continues to be as powerful as when we started as the Institute of Government in 1931. What has changed over time, and what will continue to change, is the work of our faculty and staff in carrying out our mission.

One of the School's hallmarks has been responsiveness in meeting the needs of public officials. Our faculty and staff are focused on how we can continuously improve our ability to help you. Several years ago, faculty members launched specialized, free blogs, such as *North Carolina Criminal Law* and *Coates' Canons: North Carolina Local Government Law*, to provide timely and accessible updates. Thanks to your positive feedback, we've created even more free, online content.

Over the years we have added important new programs that advance our core mission of serving North Carolina public officials. The Center for Public

Technology is an example, and so is the Development Finance Initiative. One priority that emerged from our recent planning process is the need to expand the availability of our public leadership programs. We host an impressive set of programs that form the core of a curriculum—*Effective Supervisory Management*, *LGFCU Fellows Program*, *Advanced Leadership Corps*, and *Public Executive Leadership Academy*. We plan to create a Center for Public Leadership that will expand our capacity to offer more programs at every level of government, including for judicial officials. Another priority is to expand the curriculum of the School's Judicial College to offer a series of courses for court officials that more closely resembles a traditional tiered curriculum with introductory, intermediate, and advanced classes.

This recent planning process and our forthcoming initiatives will continue to improve how we carry out the School's mission. Please let us know if there are other ways that we can support your important work for North Carolina.

Michael R. Smith, Dean

NORTH CAROLINA JUDICIAL COLLEGE

FACULTY

Jeffrey B. Welty, Director

Ann M. Anderson
Shea Riggsbee Denning
Sara DePasquale
James C. Drennan
Cheryl D. Howell
Dona G. Lewandowski
James M. Markham
LaToya B. Powell
John Rubin
Jessica Smith
Meredith Smith
Thomas H. Thornburg



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of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

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CHAPEL HILL, NC 27599-3330

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