

AJA BENCHMARK

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American Judges Association Meets in Alaska

The 2005 annual conference of the American Judges Association was held September 18 to 23, 2005, in Anchorage, Alaska. Conference activities commenced with a day of committee meetings followed by a reception for conference attendees. AJA president Gayle Nachitgal called the meeting to order the following morning, and conference host judge Tam Nomoto Schumann extended greetings to those assembled, as did Chief Justice Alexander O. Bryner of the Alaska Supreme Court.

Education Program

Mary Campbell McQueen, president of the National Center for State Courts, delivered the keynote address, "Courts in Changing Times." She also honored AJA by delivering the annual National Center for State Courts Distinguished Service Award to former AJA president Mike McAdam for his significant contribution to the advancement of the judiciary.

Attendees participated in outstanding education programs. Concurrent education tracks were offered on



a variety of subjects. These included "Domestic Violence Issues in Underserved Communities" (responding to domestic violence in gay, lesbian, bisexual, and
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A Resolution to Adopt an Equal Access and Equal Treatment Policy for Court Users and Court Personnel

Adopted at the American Judges Association 2005 Annual Conference in Anchorage, Alaska

WHEREAS, The Judiciary has the responsibility to treat all people with fairness and equality under the law, to preserve and protect equal justice, to comply with state/provincial judicial canons and ethical considerations, and to promote the public's trust and confidence in the Courts and Justice system. And the Judges of the American Judges Association, the only North American organization of Judges composed of both Canadian and U.S. Judges, desires to take a leadership role in creating bias-free court environments and public-friendly Courts in furtherance of these responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, Thirty-seven States have adopted Access to Justice Commissions or Equivalents, the National Center for State Courts has adopted *Achieving Fairness Through Bias-Free Behavior: A Pocket Guide for the Courts*, the National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts has adopted a policy regarding the Courts, the Conference of State Court Administrators has passed a Resolution affirming support for the National Consortium's policy, the American Bar Association's Commission on the 21st Century Judiciary has prepared a Report addressing
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