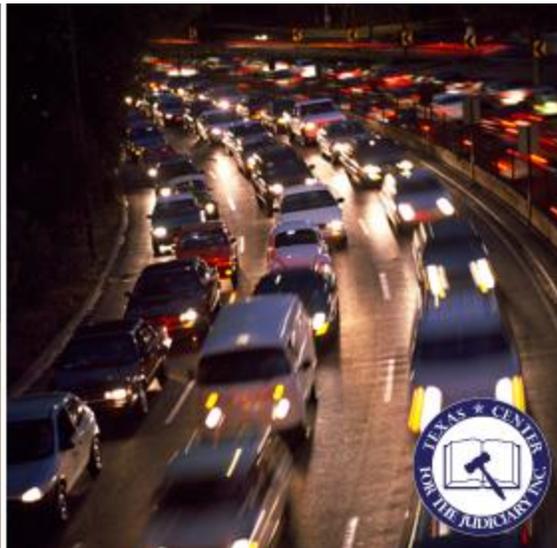


THE DWI NEWSLETTER

brought to you by

THE TEXAS CENTER FOR
THE JUDICIARY *and*
THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT
OF TRANSPORTATION



Fall 2013 Newsletter

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IN THIS ISSUE



Save a Life™
Texas Department of Transportation

In the Fall 2013 Edition of the DWI Newsletter, the "Report from the Texas Traffic Safety Grant Program" welcomes suggestions for next year's impaired driving program.

Judge Laura A. Weiser's article "What is a Judicial Resource Liaison?" answers just that.

An overview of the Annual Judicial Education Conference's TxDOT-sponsored breakout sessions is provided in the "Conference Wrap-Up."

The Education Spotlight highlights the success of Bexar County's DWI Court *Deadly Drivers, New Solutions* Program.

The "Program Partner Spotlight" showcases the Crossroads Coalition's efforts to bring Central Texas traffic safety stakeholders together.

The Traffic Safety Grant Program says thank you to the 2012-2013 DWI Curriculum Committee for their hard work.

"In the News" provides a link to recent news articles involving impaired driving issues from sources local, statewide, national and international.

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REPORT FROM THE TEXAS TRAFFIC SAFETY GRANT PROGRAM



As we, here at the Traffic Safety Grant Program, wrap up the FY 2013 grant year, we reflect on the activities of the past to learn how we can better serve the judiciary in the year ahead. In addition to providing technical assistance and conducting educational and training conferences, in FY 2014 we plan to develop a DWI benchbook and create a forms bank on the DWI Texas Judges' Resource Website.

The new grant year will be full of exciting challenges and productive activity. As always, we welcome input as to new and different activities and projects, which would assist those handling impaired driving issues.

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WHAT IS A JUDICIAL RESOURCE LIAISON?

Judge Laura A. Weiser, TxDOT Judicial Resource Liaison



Since I've been in the position of the Texas Judicial Resource Liaison, several of my colleagues have asked me exactly what the position is and what it entails. I thought I'd give you a brief history of the position and a description of the activities and duties of a judicial resource liaison.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) developed a network of criminal justice professionals who work to address issues of traffic safety and help decrease the number of traffic fatalities due to impaired driving. That network includes, among others, Regional Judicial Outreach Liaisons (RJOL) who act as teachers, writers, consultants, and spokespersons in the area of motor vehicle and pedestrian-related criminal offenses and operate within the States served by one of the ten regional NHTSA offices, Law Enforcement Liaisons (LEL) that work in a region or for a particular state, Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutors (TSRP) and State Judicial Outreach

Liaisons (SJOL except in Texas SJRL) who perform duties similar to the RJOLs but whose duties are determined by the needs of the state in which they work.

Currently there are State Judicial Outreach Liaisons in Pennsylvania, Indiana, Montana, Michigan, Florida, Georgia, Washington and Texas. Texas was the first state to create a Judicial Resource Liaison specifically for the state instead of at the regional level. Our own Judge David Hodges was the first judge to hold the position, followed by Judge Atkinson and now me. The theory underlying

the creation of this position is that local judges are in a better position to understand and to respond to local highway safety concerns and are more likely to have close working relationships with local judges and community leaders. The goal is to reduce the number of alcohol impaired and driving under the influence of alcohol and other drug-related crashes, fatalities and injuries by improving the adjudication and processing of DWI cases through improved training for judges. The position in Texas is funded by a grant from the Texas Department of Transportation.

My responsibilities include assisting the DWI Curriculum Committee in developing and presenting programs to the judiciary that include the latest information on changes to laws regarding impaired driving, license suspension, alcohol monitoring technologies and conditions of probation and sentencing; conducting training for DWI Court teams; maintaining the DWI Resources website; hosting the DWI Court judges LISTERV; providing technical assistance to judges throughout the state in the area of impaired driving; sitting as a visiting judge in DWI Courts or impaired driving cases and collaborating with judges, TXDOT partners, other criminal justice professionals and the legislature. I couldn't do any of these things without the assistance of our Program Director, Holly Doran. She keeps everything running smoothly.

Much of my responsibilities are centered on judicial education. Judicial education on impaired driving is developed by the DWI Curriculum Committee and presented at the Winter Regional Conferences, the Criminal Justice Conference and the Annual Judicial Education Conference. We also provide stand-alone conferences to new DWI Court teams, established DWI Court teams, and in collaboration with Judge Hodges, DWI Summits in rural areas to county judges, courts at law, and district judges.

That is a brief description of the position of Judicial Outreach Liaison. Now that you know what I do, don't hesitate to call me if I can be of assistance to you in any way.

Laura A. Meiser

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CONFERENCE WRAP-UP: ANNUAL JUDICIAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE



The 2013 Annual Judicial Education Conference was held September 3-6, at the JW Marriott in San Antonio. Over 150 judges attended one of three one-hour DWI-focused breakout sessions sponsored by the Texas Center's Traffic Safety Grant Program on Thursday afternoon, September 5.

The opening session, "Driving While Intoxicated -- Recent Developments in the Law" presented by Judge Elsa Alcalá, Court of Criminal Appeals, provided a comprehensive "overview of recent statutory enactments and case law relevant to DWI, with a particular focus on the issues appellate-court judges typically see in this area." Judge Alcalá's complete paper can be found [here](#).

Mr. Paul Hofmann, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Probation Fellow, followed with a session entitled, "Reducing Recidivism of the DWI Offender." Mr. Hofmann focused on the eight guiding principles for risk/recidivism reduction. To view Mr. Hofmann's PowerPoint, which includes links to helpful resources, click [here](#).

In the final session, Judge Weiser and Mr. Hofmann co-presented on ignition interlock trends. Mr. Hofmann started with an international overview and Judge Weiser finished the session with a discussion on the challenges that Texas judges face when implementing effective monitoring solutions. The PowerPoint presentation can be found [here](#).

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EDUCATION SPOTLIGHT: DEADLY DRIVERS, NEW SOLUTIONS



Congratulations to Judge Liza Rodriguez, Bexar County Court at Law #8, on a very successful program entitled *Deadly Drivers, New Solutions* presented in San Antonio on Thursday, September 26. The program, sponsored by the Texas Center for the Judiciary and TxDOT and created by the DWI Curriculum Committee, brought together all segments of the Bexar County criminal justice system to hear how a DWI Court works and how it can be successful in San Antonio. The program was well attended and received very positive media coverage ([DWI court tackles 'staggering](#)

[epidemic'](#)).



Many thanks to the presenters: Judge Robert Anchondo, El Paso County Criminal Court #2; Judge Robin Brown, Harris County Criminal Court #12; Dr. Teresa May, Director Harris County Community Supervision and Corrections Dept.; Lt. Tommy Shelton, Harris County Sheriff's Office; Ms. Bernadette Haby, Harris County Assistant District Attorney; Mr. Cole Spainhour, Williamson County DWI Court Defense Attorney; Mr. Raul Ruelas Director, San Antonio Recovery Center and the Bexar County DWI Court team for their hard

work.

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PROGRAM PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: CROSSROADS COALITION

Ms. Carol Campa & Ms. Jessica Son, TxDOT Traffic Safety Specialists



We all know that more hands make lighter work, and two heads are better than one. In this spirit of collaboration, in January 2013 the Texas Department of Transportation's Austin District Traffic Safety Specialists launched a traffic safety coalition to bring together individuals and organizations with diverse skills and expertise in traffic safety areas. The coalition has been well received in the Austin community, with strong representation from established groups, agencies, and organizations that have done great work within their own safety focus area such as: Impaired Driving, Youth Alcohol, Teen Drivers, Child Passenger Safety, Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety as well as law enforcement and public relation agencies. We also have members who can provide the necessary supporting data to identify the hot spots or problem areas & issues within our region which includes the local community and surrounding counties. The coalition's mission is *to work together to improve safety for all transportation system users by using data-driven and evidence-based approaches and strategies.*

Christened the Crossroads Coalition, the group's monthly meetings provide a forum to share

information, provide updates, support each other's work, and identify opportunities to work collectively as a group to address these issues and others attributed to risk-taking and dangerous behaviors. In addition, safety emphasis teams work independently to discuss efforts that can be implemented in the short-term, and to plan for long-term projects to have an impact on impaired driving, distracted driving, and pedestrian safety.



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THANK YOU, 2012-2013 DWI CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

The Texas Center for the Judiciary wishes to thank the members of the Texas judiciary who served on this year's DWI Curriculum Committee:



Chair, Judge Diane Bull, Harris County Criminal Court at Law #11
Judge Elizabeth Crowder, Dallas County Criminal Court at Law #7
Judge Randy Gray, Comal County Court at Law #1
Judge Mark Hocker, Lubbock County Court at Law #1
Judge Daniel Leedy, Austin County Court at Law
Judge Lori Rickert, Brazoria County Court at Law #3
Judge Liza Rodriguez, Bexar County Court at Law #8
Judge Thomas A. Spieczny, El Paso County Court at Law #7
Judge Timothy Wright, Williamson County Court at Law #2

These judges helped guide the curriculum for the the 2013 DWI Court Team Training, the 2013 DWI College for DWI Court Teams, and the TxDOT-sponsored sessions at the Winter Regional Conferences, Criminal Justice Conference and Annual Judicial Education Conference. The Texas Center's Traffic Safety Grant would like thank these judges for taking the time away from their courts and families to help further the education of their fellow judges to reduce the number of impaired drivers and alcohol-related traffic fatalities in the state of Texas.

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IN THE NEWS



Ruling overturned in DWI case

(The Deming Headlight, 09/19/2013)

Sante Fe - New Mexico's highest court ruled Thursday that a San Juan County district judge mishandled a drunken-driving case in which a man eventually was convicted.

New Texas law: Paramedics can do blood draw on scene for DWI suspects

(KNES 5 TV, 09/01/2013)

Starting Sunday, a new state law has taken effect in Texas to make it easier for the long arm of the law to catch up with drivers who have had too much to drink.

The new law, passed this spring by the Texas Legislature, says that if officers think alcohol played a factor in a crash, paramedics at the scene can draw your blood.

Drunk driving in Plano: Does Plano PD's no-refusal policy work?

(Plano Courier Star, 08/29/2013)

In 2012, nearly 1,100 people were killed in car accidents on Texas roadways involving a driver under the influence of alcohol, according to the Texas Department of Transportation.

To help decrease that number, police departments across the state often institute no-refusal policies during holiday periods. During such times, judges are on call to sign blood-draw warrants for drivers arrested on suspicion of drunk driving.

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CONTACT US

This newsletter has been provided by the Texas Center for the Judiciary pursuant to a grant from TxDOT. If you have suggestions for items to be included in this Newsletter or wish to be removed from the Newsletter mailing list, please contact:

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Holly Doran
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hollyd@yourhonor.com

The DWI Listserv is now open to all judges handling DWI cases. If you would like to be added to the Listserv please send an email to hollyd@yourhonor.com

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