



November 22, 2013

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Montgomery County Participates in Domestic Relations Summit Regional Meeting

DAYTON – With a goal of minimizing conflict for Ohio children and families, teams of domestic relations court judges and their justice system partners participated in a regional conference in preparation for a statewide summit.

Teams from around Ohio have been meeting throughout the year to assess their case management systems, examine resources, and share promising practices leading up to the statewide Domestic Relations Summit next year.

Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor charged domestic relations judges to lead a delegation of four additional key leaders from their communities who have the vision and ability to affect real change in the lives of children and families in transition. Community justice system partners may include: a member of the bar, guardian ad litem or custody evaluator, child support enforcement agency representative, victim service provider, and court and/or clerk staff.

Participating from Montgomery County were: Judge Denise L. Cross; Jane Keiffer, Program Manager Artemis Center; F. Ann Crossman, Attorney; Jennifer Getty, Attorney/Guardian ad Litem; and Michael J. Howley, Law Director/Magistrate.

To assess the current state of their court, using a facilitator provided by the Supreme Court, teams will complete an assessment of their local case management practices by identifying tasks that each party performs to advance a case through the entire caseflow process. Teams will analyze the case management for steps that can be streamlined, combined, or reorganized. Then, teams will assess their resources. Teams will analyze their resources to ensure their optimal use. Finally, teams will identify challenges and solutions.

The summit – April 24-25, 2014 in Columbus – will shine a light on Ohio's domestic relations courts, which have jurisdiction over all proceedings involving divorce or dissolution of marriages, annulment, legal separation, spousal support, and allocation of parental rights and responsibilities for the care of children.

Modeled after the National Summit on Children, the idea for the summit came about after the success of the Supreme Court's *Beyond the Numbers* project, which primarily focused on improving court processes for the benefit of children and families.

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