



Attention: Judges, Coordinators, Treatment Providers, and Others Working with Veterans Treatment Courts

A crucial component of Veterans Treatment Courts is its relationship with the Veterans Justice Outreach program. The VJO specialist is a valuable resource for any treatment court, as he or she are able to connect veterans to the services they are entitled to from the VA. However, many VTCs struggle with how to successfully integrate the VJO specialist into their team.

To address this issue, the Justice Programs Office at American University is presenting a webinar entitled **The VJO Specialist in Veterans Treatment Courts: The Glue Holding VTCs Together** on Wednesday, November 9th, 2016 from 2:00 – 3:30 pm EST. Presenters include Justice Evelyn Lundberg Stratton (ret.); Ms. Mary Gillette, LISW-S; and Judge John Zottola.

This webinar will cover:

- The history of the VJO program, including the problems it was designed to address and some of the challenges it faces;
- The way a successful VJO program operates; and
- Lessons learned about VJO involvement; achievements and areas for improvement.

Date: Wednesday, November 9, 2016 from 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM Eastern

Presenters: Justice Evelyn Lundberg Stratton (ret.), Ohio Supreme Court
Ms. Mary Gillette, LISW-S, Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator, Chalmers P. Wylie VA Ambulatory Care Center, Ohio
Judge John Zottola, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Court of Common Pleas

Organization of the Session:

The webinar session is scheduled for 90 minutes, with presentations planned for the first 60 minutes and the final 30 minutes devoted to answering the attendees' questions.

The webinar will be interactive. Attendees are invited to submit their questions in advance (to justice@american.edu) and/or during the session.



To register for the webinar:

1. Go to: <https://bj-a-au.webex.com/bja-au/onstage/g.php?MTID=e3d92182d67661047b4100d1259f56a98>
2. Click Register.
3. On the registration form, enter your information and then click Submit.
4. This will generate an automatic e-mail confirming your registration and providing you with the information to attend the event (the e-mail will be from “messenger”).

If you are unable to participate in the live session, the slides and recording of the webinar will be available shortly after the webinar and archived at www.american.edu/spa/jpo

About Our Panelists:

Justice Evelyn Lundberg Stratton (ret.) retired from the Supreme Court of Ohio early to pursue more fully criminal justice reforms with a particular emphasis on veterans who become involved with the justice system. She established the Veterans in the Courts Initiative in 2009. Evelyn “Eve” Stratton was a former trial judge for seven years, and an Ohio Supreme Court Justice for 16 years. As a daughter of American missionaries to Thailand, she moved to America at age 18, alone and with \$500, and put herself through college and law school. She credits her missionary parents for her passion for criminal justice reforms. She comes from a long line of veterans – a grandfather killed in the line of duty (KIA) in WWII, five uncles and a father who also served in WWII, and two brothers who served in the Vietnam Theater. For over twenty years, Stratton has lead reform efforts affecting those in the revolving door of criminal justice and mental illness, helping to lead the movement on mental health courts. Her more recent efforts focus on veterans involved the criminal justice system. She assisted the Department of Veterans Administration in establishing veterans treatment courts; served on the VA committee that launched the Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) Program; founded Operation Legal Help Ohio, a nonprofit for pro bono services to military and veterans; cofounded Resurrecting Lives, a non-profit focusing on veterans and traumatic brain injury (TBI); co-chairs the Ohio Attorney General’s Task Force on Mental Illness and Criminal Justice, with a sub-committee on Veterans Courts and Military Affairs, among other veterans-related issues. Stratton teaches and speaks nationally on veterans and criminal justice reform issues. She also practices appellate law with a prestigious Columbus, Ohio law firm, Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease, and consults on criminal justice and mental health reform issues through EStratton Consulting, LLC.

Mary Gillette is a graduate of The Ohio State University. She is a Licensed Independent Social Worker-Supervisor for the State of Ohio and Certified Domestic Violence Counselor by the National Forensic Training



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Institute. She is experienced in the area of criminal justice and worked as a mental health and substance abuse counselor with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections from 1997 to 2005. Mary is currently a Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator with the Chalmers P. Wylie VA Ambulatory Care Center in Columbus. She has worked at this facility for the past 10 years, first as a homeless outreach social worker and now as the Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) Coordinator. Her role as a VJO Coordinator began in 2009 as part of the Franklin County Mental Health and Drug Court dockets and later as VA liaison to the Franklin County Military and Veterans Services Specialty Docket. Currently she serves as VA liaison to Marion County Municipal Court Veterans Court which began in October of 2011. Mary continues to collaborate with other courts in her catchment area to assist in establishing Veteran specialty courts. She continues to network with many community providers and serves on several committees devoted to serving the Veteran population including the Ohio Attorney Generals Task Force on Veterans Affairs. Her involvement with the AG Task Force has increased accessibility for Veterans needing access to healthcare, treatment, residential and transitional housing post-release from incarceration.

Judge John Zottola has served as a judge in the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County since 1994. He was the principle architect in the creation of the Allegheny County Veterans Court, which commenced in 2009, and continues to supervise that court. From 2007 until 2011, Judge Zottola also supervised Allegheny County's Mental Health Court, which has received national recognition. He was an original member of the Veterans in Pennsylvania Criminal Justice Task Force, and since 2007, Judge Zottola has been a member of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD). In 2009, he helped create and now chairs the Mental Health and Justice Advisory Committee of the Commission (MHJAC). Judge Zottola is an adjunct professor at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, where he teaches mental health law. Judge Zottola is the 2013 recipient of the Louis J. Presenza Distinguished Service award, presented by the Pennsylvania Association of Drug Court and Professionals.

DRUG COURT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT

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