

# County Administrator's Digest

July 15 2011

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## **FACILITIES MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

Former Facilities Management Director Bill Morse's retirement was effective at the end of June. Bill did a great job for 23 years. I decided to assign Keith Van Beek as Interim Facilities Management Director and he will lead an assessment of the operations of this important department. Twenty-three years is a long time and Keith will be applying fresh eyes to operations, technology and other areas and assessing where the department is today and where improvements and efficiencies can be realized.

This interim period is anticipated to last between 3 and 6 months.

## **BENCHMARK COLUMN ARTICLE ON JUANITY BOCANEGRA** (Ron Frantz)

Prosecutor Ron Frantz sent in the latest issue of the Thomas Cooley Alumni News Publication ("Benchmark Column"). There is an interesting feature article about assistant prosecutor Juanita Bocanegra. ([Click here](#))

## **STATUS REPORT AND UPDATE – JULY 11 STORM** (Keith Van Beek)

Hopefully most of you were able to avoid any damage or have already recovered from the effects of the intense storm on Monday that primarily impacted the Holland area. This note is intended to provide employees and others with information regarding the storm, impacts on our operations and some mitigation steps we will investigate for the future.

The Holland District Court is supplied power through the Holland Board of Public Works (BPW) and lost power when the storm hit Monday morning. The four buildings on the James Street campus (Community Mental Health Administration Building or Building A, Community Mental Health or Building B, Health Department or Building C, and the Department of Human Services Building) were also all impacted to varying degrees. Building A is supplied power through Consumers Energy, while the other three buildings receive power through Holland BPW. Building A lost power, while the other three buildings had power throughout the event. The phone and computer systems controlled by the County, however, are located in Building A so those systems went down for the other buildings when Building A lost power. In consultation with the Judges and other leadership at the impacted sites, I implemented the County policy on "Closure of County Buildings and Facilities" in consultation with the Sheriff and Board Chair. (This policy can be located on the "Front Page" of the County intranet under policies.) The two locations that lost power worked through the morning to serve clients and alter plans for the after-



noon, but with the uncertainty of power being restored closed around noon and employees were sent home. While the other impacted locations had intermittent use of phones and computers, the decision was made in consultation with their leadership to keep their operations open. While these are always difficult decisions to make, we feel the correct decisions were made to both protect the general public and our employees and yet provide the high quality of services residents have come to expect of us.

Power was restored to both facilities after 2 PM, however the power to Building A came off and on several times. This will explain for many why the phones and computers worked sporadically at some locations on Monday. We were thankful that no further power issues were experienced the remainder of the week and thank Steve Close and the facilities maintenance workers for their efforts in this area.

We plan to consult with the power companies in the coming months to examine possible options to limit the impact to our operations when such events arise. Specifically, options might be available regarding the interesting situation at James Street of having two providers power that campus. Additionally, the County has access to a large generator that could be transported and configured to support some of the power needs in a specific building if an extended power outage is experienced. While it would take time to get the generator properly situated, we will examine how this could best be planned out and implemented if the need arises.

### **HARD CAP – 80/20 HEALTH CARE LEGISLATION**

I wrote about the House Bill rewrite that combined the House favored concept of hard caps on what public employers can legally pay toward employees health insurance with the Senate favored approach of limiting public employers to paying 80% of public employee health care insurance cost.

The Senate rejected the House Bill and the Senate and House Bills now go to conference committee. In any event, an agreement is not likely until the end of the summer at the earliest.

The following article presents a good summary:

#### **Michigan lawmakers continue to wrestle with employee health costs**

By Peter Luke

MLive.com

Published: Wednesday, July 13, 2011, 3:02 PM Updated: Wednesday, July 13, 2011, 6:40 PM

[http://blog.mlive.com/elections\\_impact/print.html?entry=/2011/07/michigan\\_lawmakers\\_continue\\_to\\_1.html](http://blog.mlive.com/elections_impact/print.html?entry=/2011/07/michigan_lawmakers_continue_to_1.html)

**Editor's note:** *The State of Change blog is continuing past its initial 180-day countdown to July 1, and expanding in scope. This is one in a series of posts that will assess changes in Michigan government, politics, economics and business. For earlier posts go to [mlive.com/stateofchange](http://mlive.com/stateofchange).*

Republicans in the Senate have rejected the House GOP's version of a sweeping statewide requirement that public employees pay more for their health insurance.

The 36-0 vote today sends the bill to a conference committee where members will work over the summer to cobble together an agreement on an issue Senate Majority Leader Randy Richardville says is filled with legal complications.

As passed originally, **Senate Bill 7** would limit public employers at the state and local level to paying no more than 80 percent of the cost of employee health benefit packages.

The House prefers a hard dollar limit on employer liability - \$15,000 for a family plan and \$5,500 for an individual policy. But the House rewrite does give school districts and local governments the option to choose the 80-20 share if they prefer a less prescriptive limit.

Gov. Rick Snyder, who in upcoming negotiations aims to secure employee benefit concessions along the 80-20 lines already in place for new workers, says he likes either approach.

A constitutional amendment that would also apply cost sharing to universities was approved by the Senate, but failed to secure the necessary two-thirds vote in the House.

Budget provisions on state aid to K-12 districts and municipalities is contingent on employees paying more for their health insurance.

Democrats argued that health care cost sharing should be accomplished through local bargaining, not a one-size-fits-all dictate from the Legislature.

Local governments, but not K-12 districts, could opt out of the requirement with a two-thirds vote of a city council or county commission.

Contact Peter Luke at 517-487-8888 ext. 235 or email him at [pluke@boothmichigan.com](mailto:pluke@boothmichigan.com).

# Benchmark

THE THOMAS M. COOLEY LAW SCHOOL ALUMNI NEWS PUBLICATION

# COLEUMN

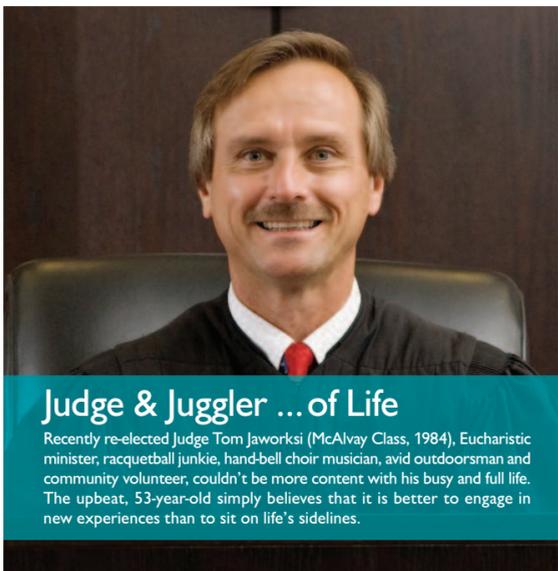
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## National Champions

Erin Moss and LaToya Palmer comprise the top client counseling team in the United States. The Detroit natives recently bested teams from 95 law schools across the United States, taking first place in the American Bar Association's Law Student Division Client Counseling National Competition.

Cooley has done such a great job of teaching us the fundamentals of law. We had a lot of practical knowledge going into the competition that I don't think the judges expected to see from law students." **LATOYA PALMER**



## Judge & Juggler ... of Life

Recently re-elected Judge Tom Jaworski (McAlvay Class, 1984), Eucharistic minister, racquetball junkie, hand-bell choir musician, avid outdoorsman and community volunteer, couldn't be more content with his busy and full life. The upbeat, 53-year-old simply believes that it is better to engage in new experiences than to sit on life's sidelines.



## Giving Back: Making a Difference in the Lives of Others

David Whipple (Butzel Class, 1979) talks enthusiastically about his work, his teaching, and his community involvement, but it's never about him. It's always centered on how his work has affected the lives of others.

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THE THOMAS M. COOLEY LAW SCHOOL

*In corde hominum est anima legis.*  
1972

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JUANITA BOCANEGRA, ASSISTANT PROSECUTOR, OTTAWA COUNTY, MICHIGAN

# Growing

## IN SO MANY WAYS

The daughter of migrant workers, Juanita Bocanegra knew at the early age of six that she wanted a different life. She wanted to be an attorney.



The daughter of migrant workers who split the year between Michigan and Texas, Juanita Bocanegra (Kavanagh Class, 2008) knew at the early age of six that she wanted a different life. She wanted to be an attorney.

"I knew that attorneys helped people and that they worked in an office," said Bocanegra. "I didn't need to know any more than that."

It was a lofty goal for a young girl who 12 years later would become the first in her family to graduate from high school, earning her degree from West Ottawa High School in Holland, Mich.

But it was only the beginning of a journey that she would ultimately take to reach her goal of becoming an attorney.

### Life happens

Bocanegra went on to earn a bachelor's degree in international relations from nearby Grand Valley State University. The idea was to pair that degree with a law degree to become an international business lawyer. But life had more in store for Bocanegra.

With a budding young family, she took a job as a legal assistant at Hann Persinger, a Holland, Michigan, law firm.

During her job interview with a partner at the law firm, she stated, "I'm going to be an attorney; I'm going to go to law school."

"I think it surprised him that I was mentioning this career goal during the interview process," said Bocanegra. "But that goal was part of who I was, and I wanted him to know that."

As she learned the ropes in a new profession, she and her husband Jose began making plans to leave Michigan to return to Texas with their two daughters. The move would have put the family near relatives and allowed her to attend a Texas law school.

"We thought long and hard about it," said Bocanegra. "But we liked Holland and would have been moving for someone else. In the end, we decided it was best to stay (in Michigan)."

At about the same time, Cooley announced that it was opening a campus in Grand Rapids, Michigan, a 30-minute drive from her home. Now was the time; Bocanegra was going to start law school.

### Jam-packed schedule

For the next five years, Bocanegra juggled work, family and studies.

"I'm not sure I ever had an hour just for me," said Bocanegra when discussing her time in law school. "Lunch hours were filled with paying bills, studying, and running errands."

Bocanegra attended class on the weekends in Grand Rapids. Her family handled responsibilities elsewhere, including her husband, who took care of their children. It was a full-scale effort to make a legal education possible.

Bocanegra would even take vacation time before exams in an effort to focus on studying. She still went to work, but spent her vacation days studying in one of the conference rooms at the law office.

"The people at Hann Persinger were great," said Bocanegra. "If I had a question, I had a group of lawyers to go to. They helped me a great deal."

### A switch in careers

After graduating from Cooley in 2008, Bocanegra accepted an offer from Rhoades McKee, a prominent firm in Michigan's second largest city – Grand Rapids. There, she focused on business, employment and family law. She had previously completed an externship at the firm.

"It was a great opportunity," said Bocanegra. "But ultimately I sought a role that would dramatically increase my interaction with people."

Bocanegra found that role in a position with the Ottawa County Prosecutor's Office as an assistant prosecutor – located in her hometown of Holland. She started her work there in March, 2011.

According to the *Holland Sentinel*, Bocanegra was selected from an applicant pool of more than 300 attorneys. She is one of two bilingual prosecutors in Ottawa County.

"I feel as if this is a role that will enable me to contribute more directly to my community," said Bocanegra. "I'm making decisions about charges and offers being made (to defendants)."

In her new role, Bocanegra handles an array of cases that include matters involving domestic violence, drugs, breaking and entering, and embezzlement.

She will also be spending a great deal of time in the courtroom, a place that she says Cooley really prepared her to handle.

"Cooley has one of the best trial skills programs," said Bocanegra. "I was already familiar with some of the forms and formalities from my days as a legal assistant. That background, paired with my training at Cooley, is serving me well."

### Right down the street, worlds away

Today, Bocanegra works only miles from where she spent eight months a year as a youth, yet she is worlds away professionally.

"If there is a will, there is a way," said Bocanegra in summing up her professional accomplishments.

When asked about how her family reacts to her success, she said, "My father really enjoys it. His eyes got very big, very proud when visiting my workplace. He can't believe that his daughter has a secretary."

The proud father might have more to be proud of in the years to come. Bocanegra's daughter Jasmin, age 12, has indicated that she wants to be a doctor and a lawyer. Most would attribute those lofty goals as being naive. Not Bocanegra.

"It can be done," she said. "I know of people who have done it."

**Name:** Juanita Bocanegra

**Title:** Assistant Prosecutor, Ottawa County, Mich.

**Age:** 36

**Born:** In Mexico

**Family:** Married to Jose, 39. They have two children: Jasmin, age 12, and Jaquelyn, age 9.

**Community Involvement:** Community Foundation of the Holland/Zeeland Area, board of directors

**Education:**

B.A., International Relations, Grand Valley State University  
J.D., Thomas M. Cooley Law School

# CLASS NOTES

Cooley encourages all graduates to contribute information to the Class Notes. We want to learn about your law practice and other accomplishments in the legal profession. E-mail: [communications@cooley.edu](mailto:communications@cooley.edu)

### 1976 Cooley Class

**Drick, Jay R.**, a solo practitioner in Howell, Mich., was elected and sworn in as a county commissioner for Livingston County, Mich., 2011-2012. He continues to operate his private practice of license restoration, landlord rights, and consumer rights. Phone: (517) 546-5601.

### 1978 Marston Class

**Hoort, David**, judge, 8th Circuit Court, Michigan, was elected treasurer of the Criminal Law Section for the State Bar of Michigan in September at the Bar's annual meeting. Judge Hoort also writes a judge/law-related blog at <http://judgedavidhoort.blogspot.com/> that is published on the web edition of the *Ionia Sentinel-Standard* at [www.sentinel-standard.com/](http://www.sentinel-standard.com/).

### 1981 Dethmers Class

**Hamre, Paul E.**, chief judge of the Van Buren County (Michigan) Family, District, and Circuit courts, has been elected treasurer of the Michigan Judges Association.

**Stupak, Bart**, joined Venable LLP as a partner in the firm's Legislative and Government Affairs Group. The former U.S. Congressman also serves as a Fellow at Harvard University's Institute of Politics, and leads a study group on government investigations at the Kennedy School of Government.

### 1981 Long Class

**Larsen, Steven J.L.**, has joined the South Haven, Mich., office of Willis Law. He has over 30 years of legal and business experience in corporate law, contract drafting and negotiations, real estate development, new business development, management and strategic planning. He is also a licensed pilot.

### 1984 Carr Class

**Juroszek, John**, has been named Reporter of Decisions for the Michigan Supreme Court and the Michigan Court of Appeals. In this role, he is responsible for editing and publishing decisions of the two courts. He also publishes Michigan court rules, evidence rules, and Supreme Court administrative orders. He previously served as legal editor for the Reporter of Decisions.

### 1986 Mundy Class

**Royster, Larry**, a 24-year veteran at the Michigan Court of Appeals, has been appointed as the court's chief clerk. He now serves both as the chief clerk and as the Court of Appeal's research director.

### 1987 Morse Class

**McBain, John**, a judge in the 4th Circuit Court, Jackson, County, Mich., was named by the Michigan Supreme Court as Chief Judge of the 4th Circuit Court. He was first elected to the bench in 1992. Previously, he was the Prosecuting Attorney of Jackson County.

### 1989 Douglass Class

**Telgenhof, Allen R.**, has co-founded a firm, Telgenhof & Snyder, P.C., in Charlevoix, Mich. He focuses his practice in the areas of civil litigation, securities fraud, family law, criminal defense, and business formation and transactions. Phone: (231) 547-3400; e-mail: [atelgenhof@charlevoixlaw.com](mailto:atelgenhof@charlevoixlaw.com).

### 1990 Wilson Class

**Kole, Jerome**, is the new Region IV Administrator for the State Court Administrators Office. In this role, he oversees court operations in an area that includes much of the northern Lower Peninsula of Michigan as well as all of the state's Upper Peninsula.

### 1990 B.F.H. Withereil Class

**Schwinn, Christina Harris**, a partner with the Pavese Law Firm in Ft. Myers, Fla., graduated from the Chamber of Southwest Florida's Leadership Lee County program. Participants in the program are chosen by a selection committee. Schwinn's primary practice areas are employment law, business transactions, community association law, and real estate law. Phone: (239) 336-6292

### 1991 Turner Class

**Blinderman, Craig H.**, has joined the Hollywood, Fla., law firm of Rosenberg & Rosenberg, P.A. He is a personal injury litigator. His 19 years of experience include more than 15 years' experience in Personal Injury Protection (PIP) litigation representing both plaintiffs and insurance carriers.

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