

# BENCH AND BAR: News and Announcements

## Tour de Courts: Springfield Municipal Court

by Larissa M. Warren, Husch Blackwell LLP



Tour de Courts is a SMBA program wherein attorneys new to the profession or to the Springfield area are exposed to a variety of local courts and introduced to judges, staff, and courtrooms. The experience of entering Judge Thornhill's courtroom at the Springfield Municipal Court was very different than entering the

other courts the 2017 Tour de Courts' cohort had visited previously. As we filed in the back, Judge Thornhill was talking to a televised young man in jail about his history of missing court dates. Once enough of us had arrived, Judge Thornhill took a short break to explain what was happening: the men we could see on the television were currently in jail after being arrested over the weekend for outstanding warrants issued due to failure to appear at court. These inmates were now facing Judge Thornhill to resolve the original offense requiring the missed court appearance or to reschedule a court date and be released subject to, or without, bail.

Observing this proceeding provided a unique experience among the Tour de Courts' stops in that it put us face to face with the people who drive the legal profession – those actually in need of legal services. Earlier visits to the Greene County Court, the Missouri Court of Appeals for the Southern District, and the Western District of Missouri were enlightening as to our understanding of the system and the judges, clerks, and staff behind those courtroom doors. However, the lack of a proceeding in process afforded a distance from the clients whose cases were actually being litigated in those courthouses. A distance that was impossible to achieve inside the Springfield Municipal Courthouse watching the inmates provide their explanations for past behavior that had resulted in a weekend in a jail cell.

This final courthouse stop in 2017 Tour de Courts was a powerful reminder to me that I must never focus so much on my aspirations, colleagues, mentors, or even the profession, that I lose sight of the client. Whether in the form of a national corporation, a local non-profit, a homeless person, or something else entirely, the client is the drive behind what I do. While the facts and background vary immensely from client to client, those faces on the screen in Springfield Municipal Court symbolized to me the need for guidance and advocacy that every person or entity have when they decide to consult an attorney. Meeting that need for each client patiently, holistically, ethically, and zealously must always be my primary measure of success as a lawyer.

## Courthouse Construction Update

The SMBA provides weekly updates online at [springfieldbar.com](http://springfieldbar.com) to keep members advised of the progress and any logistics that need to be navigated during courthouse renovations.



June 8, 2017 Update

by Jerry Moyer, Court Administrator

MSI is working very hard on the project. Dry wall installation and mudding the seams has been completed. Wall painting is almost complete. The sprinkler system installation is nearing completion. Testing of the sprinkler system is being conducted prior to it being activated to ensure no leakage. Ceiling grid and panels are being installed. Carpeting is being installed. Electrical is nearing completion. Thank you for the great patience everyone has shown!

## Applications Open: Greene County Judge

The 31st Circuit Judicial Commission has opened applications for the office of Associate Circuit Judge position of the 31st Judicial Circuit (Greene County), created by the retirement of The Honorable Dan Imhof. Application information available at <http://www.courts.mo.gov>

## The Hon. Arthur B. Federman Retirement Reception

Wednesday, June 21, 2017 from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on the 3rd floor of the Springfield U. S. Courthouse, 222 N. John Q. Hammons Parkway.



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2017 BENCH & BAR  
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The SMBA Bench and Bar committee welcomes your confidential inquires and suggestions. Please contact any of the members listed above.

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