



Join Us

Become an involved member of the Council of Chief Judges of the State Courts of Appeal.



President's Welcome

It's hard for me to believe that it was almost eight years ago that I first joined CCJSCA – the time has flown by!

Equally fresh is my memory of how I felt when I first started in my new role as Chief, and my immediate awareness of how much I needed to learn. Though our courts (and terms and selection processes) are different from one state to the next, the challenges we face as chiefs share a remarkable number of common themes. Among those challenges, and connecting many of them, is discovering the truth in the adage that “it’s lonely at the top.” As lawyers and judges we typically are not trained to manage or to lead, and there are few places we may turn safely or confidently for support or sound advice. Other than CCJSCA.

Our annual conference isn't just an event—it's where education, connection, and lasting professional friendships come together.

As you will soon discover, our annual conference is our signature event, bringing us all together in consistently terrific locations for several days of education and networking. I can't encourage you strongly enough to carve out time from your schedule this fall to attend our 2026 conference in sunny Scottsdale, Arizona. If you have even the slightest hesitation, please take a peek at the educational and social program agendas from some of our past conferences <https://ccjsca.net/conferences-category/past-conferences/> – and talk to your New Member mentor to hear what they have to say.

In between annual conferences, our members stay connected to each other, while advancing our collective mission, through participation in our various standing committees. The committees cover a broad range of activities and – recognizing the many demands already

posed by your “pesky day job” – don't require a huge time commitment. They are a great way to learn more about the Council, and the connections you make with your fellow committee members serve the incidental additional benefit of side conversations around the meetings, in which members share common “top of mind” questions we all encounter from time to time.

I have greatly enjoyed my involvement in various committees since first joining the Council, and have enjoyed even more my attendance at our annual conferences each year – but in both instances my pleasure was as much or more a product of the friendships I formed with my fellow chiefs from other states as of the considerable value the resulting education provided in helping me do my job.

We are – each of us and all of us – most fortunate for the vision of our predecessors who saw fit in 1980 to form the CCJSCA, and for the leadership of those who have guided it through the ensuing years, including several periods that posed financial or other serious threats to the organization's viability. We are privileged to stand on the shoulders of giants. And now it's your turn – please join us, both for the personal and professional benefit you will draw from your participation, and to help carry on the legacy of our fellow chiefs from the past half-century.



CHIEF JUSTICE MARK V. GREEN (Ret.),
Massachusetts Appeals Court
President, Council of Chief Judges of the State Courts of Appeal



MEET JUSTICES:

When available, Justices from the United States Supreme Court and Chief Justices from our State Supreme Courts join us as speakers and at our receptions.



Justices Sandra Day O'Connor, Clarence Thomas, Stephen Breyer, and Samuel Alito have attended conferences. Justice Sonia Sotomayor attended the 2025 Annual Conference Farewell Dinner at the Supreme Court of the United States.



Chief Judge Mark Green (MA) and Judge Stephen Powell (OH) with Justice Stephen Breyer in Boston.

Annual Conferences

Without question, one of the most meaningful benefits of membership in the **Council of Chief Judges of State Courts of Appeal (CCJSCA)** is the opportunity to gather each year for an annual conference designed specifically for the unique responsibilities of intermediate appellate court leadership

Ask any member and they'll tell you—the annual conference is more than a CLE. It is a chance to step away from the day-to-day demands of leadership and reconnect with colleagues who understand, firsthand, the unique role of a chief judge.

Last year's conference in Washington, D.C. offered an extraordinary blend of substance and experience. As is customary, nationally recognized speakers and authors were featured. A presentation about the role of judges in the Holocaust was followed by a visit to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Attendees had an opportunity to experience Washington, D.C. at night through a jaw-dropping guided monuments tour. The conference was capped off by dinner in the Hall of Justice of the United States Supreme Court, with special guest Justice Sonia Sotomayor. These experiences reinforced the Council's commitment to learning, reflection, and collegiality at the highest level.

In 2026, CCJSCA will gather in the warmth of Scottsdale, Arizona, for a conference that is both forward-looking and historically grounded. As the nation marks the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the conference theme—**"Spreading the Rule of Law"**—invites chief judges to reflect on the enduring role of appellate courts in safeguarding constitutional principles, institutional legitimacy, and public trust.

Appellate courts play a vital role in giving life to constitutional principles. The Annual Conference Committee has an exceptional lineup of national experts, constitutional scholars, and appellate specialists planned, with

programs focusing on leadership, jurisprudence, and the evolving challenges facing courts across the country. It will offer the best of what CCJSCA does—outstanding educational programming, honest and supportive dialogue among peers, and time to build relationships that endure long after the conference ends. Whether you are a newer chief judge or a seasoned leader, the Council provides a welcoming space grounded in shared experience and mutual respect.

We invite chief judges from around the nation to join us—both in membership and in community—as we come together at a moment when the rule of law, and those entrusted to uphold it, matter more than ever.



www.ccjsca.org



Our Mission

www.ccjsca.org

To promote the improvement of the administration of justice, rules and methods of procedure, and the organization and operation of intermediate appellate courts by offering the Chief Judges of the intermediate appellate courts a body for consultation and education.

consultation & education

Benefits of Membership

Every chief judge is busy—busy with administrative matters, busy with their caseload, and busy volunteering for law-related organizations. And then there is life outside of work. So why take more of your limited time to join another organization? The answer is simple: the Council is not just another organization, it's an organization created specifically for helping people like you—judges who already know how to judge, but now have to manage an entire court. The Council does this in many different ways:

- A. Engaging new members through an informal **mentorship program** that connects new Chiefs with a current member, providing an introduction to the Council and a contact for related issues;
- B. Spectacular **annual conferences**, which provide not only excellent and varied substantive programs, but create an unsurpassed opportunity to meet chiefs from across the country with whom ideas and experiences can be shared (scholarships to reduce or eliminate the cost of attendance are available to member courts);
- C. **Web-based programming**, such as “Chief Chats” and “GEMS,” provide great opportunities throughout the year to discuss varying topics related to court administration and related matters, while the website contains valuable material compiled over the years, and hosts an active “Chiefs Forum” for the quick sharing of ideas and resources between member courts;
- D. An opportunity to **get involved in leadership** roles, giving you a better opportunity to share your ideas and to continue the work of the Council.
- E. By participating in any of the above, the opportunity to gain **lifelong friendships**, resourceful contacts, and great memories.



Join Us

Courts from the following states are members of CCJSCA.

Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin

ANNUAL CONFERENCE SITES

What They Are Saying

Conference attendance provides an opportunity to see parts of the country you may not otherwise visit while allowing you to meet Chief Judges from around the country. Networking with these Chiefs will expose you to alternative ways to manage the administration of Justice in your State.

“ The CCJSCA Annual Conference is a remarkable experience. The substantive content is highly relevant, specifically targeted to issues and challenges facing chief judges of intermediate appellate courts. And notably, the conference fosters a welcoming and inclusive environment, allowing members ample opportunity to share in the collective experience and wisdom of thoughtful and generous colleagues and to forge meaningful relationships lasting well after the conference concludes. It is not to be missed!



– Jennifer L. Frisch, Chief Judge
Minnesota Court of Appeals

“ As I begin my sixth year with the CCJSCA, I remain impressed by the quality of the annual conferences. The Council selects outstanding venues, and the speakers have been among the best I've seen. Most meaningful are the friendships I've formed and insights gained from colleagues across the country—experiences that are invaluable. The closing dinners have been memorable highlights. I feel fortunate to be part of this group and look forward to the conference in Scottsdale this November!



– Scott E. Stevens, Chief Justice
Texas Sixth District Court of Appeals

“ As a first time attendee, I felt welcomed and greatly appreciated meeting other chief judges from across the country. It was an excellent conference that provided different strategies on managing challenges unique to chief judges and offered self-care tips. I particularly enjoyed meeting Ross Guberman and found his writing session to be informative and practical.



– Renee Hardin-Tammons, Judge
Missouri Court of Appeals - Eastern District

The locations for the Council's annual conferences have spanned the country. Here are a few of the latest host cities we have enjoyed:

- 2013 – St. Louis, Missouri
- 2014 – New Orleans, Louisiana
- 2015 – New Jersey/New York City
- 2016 – Cary (Raleigh), North Carolina
- 2017 – Lexington, Kentucky
- 2018 – San Diego, California
- 2019 – Denver, Colorado
- 2021 – Boston, Massachusetts
- 2022 – Amelia Island, Florida
- 2023 – Charleston, South Carolina
- 2024 – Monterey, California
- 2025 – Washington, District of Columbia
- 2026 – Scottsdale, Arizona
- 2027 – San Antonio, Texas



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