

7/2/02

**HAWAII SUPREME COURT COMMITTEE ON
EQUALITY AND ACCESS TO THE COURTS**
BRIEF CHRONOLOGY

- 1980s Various states examine the issue of gender bias in the legal system.
- 1986 Hawaii Women Lawyers (HWL) submits resolution to the Third Annual Judicial Conference (Bench-Bar Conference) calling for an ad hoc committee to study the issue of gender bias; resolution is passed. Chief Justice Herman T.F. Lum appoints Judge Linda Luke and Leslie A. Hayashi as co-chairs.
- 1987 A survey is drafted and mailed to all attorneys; results are analyzed by SMS and disseminated.
- 1989 HWL submits a second resolution to the Fifth Annual Judicial Conference calling for a permanent committee to address issues relating to gender bias; the resolution is passed; Chief Justice Lum establishes the Hawaii Supreme Court Committee on Gender and Other Bias with Judge Daniel G. Heely and Dorothy Ching appointed as co-chairs.
- Projects include promoting awareness of the issue, judges' training, and submission to the Legislature requesting funds to hire staff.
- 1990 At the Committee's request, Chief Justice Herman T.F. Lum changes the committee's name to Hawaii Supreme Court Committee on Gender and Other Fairness.
- 1991 State Legislature passes bill authorizing funds for the Office on Gender and Other Fairness.
- 1992 Dew Kaneshiro is hired as the Project Director. Judge Leslie A. Hayashi and Judge Daniel G. Heely are appointed as co-chairs.
- 1992 Committee projects include examination of the entire legal system from law students, associates, firms, to judges and judiciary staff. Specific projects include: sexual harassment training for judges and judiciary staff, court interpreter training, and overrepresentation by certain minorities in the

criminal justice system is also discussed.

1993 James E. Duffy, Jr. is appointed co-chair when Judge Heely is named Administrative Director of the Courts.

1994 The Committee's and GOF Office's projects focus on fairness issues within the entire legal system: economic impact of divorce research and article, law firm model sexual harassment policy, sexual harassment awareness training, law student survey, interviewing techniques and resource manual for law students and law firms.

For a brief period of time the Committee operates as a joint committee with the HSBA's Committee on Gender Fairness.

1995 Projects include developing and conducting ADA training for judges, examining Rule 8.4 of the Code of Professional Responsibility, holding statewide briefings, and recommending changes to the Hawai'i Supreme Court for consideration which are ultimately not adopted. The First National Conference on Eliminating Race and Ethnic Bias in the Courts sponsored by SJI is held. A panel discusses issues relating to race and ethnic bias in the criminal justice system and an advisory panel report is issued.

1996 The Committee's and the office's names are changed to Hawai'i Supreme Court Committee on Equality and Access to the Courts and the Office on Equality and Access to the Courts, respectively. The emphasis is on eliminating barriers and increasing access for court users. The HSBA hosts its Citizens Conference on Access to Justice and several follow up committees are established.

Projects include a uniform signage survey, the development of a self-help center and the simplification of court forms.

1997- 1999 Projects include the dissemination of legal information in English as well as other languages. Videos on small claims and traffic proceedings in district court are produced and subsequently dubbed into Ilokano and Korean and close-captioned; the Judiciary-HSBA Lawline project is expanded to include the Multilingual LawLine which consists of five recordings in seven languages: Cantonese, Ilokano, Japanese, Korean, Samoan, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Cards in the different languages listing the five different

recordings in seven languages are distributed to media and service providers. A directory of bilingual attorneys and paralegals is compiled and distributed to various service providers. A leadership group to establish a self-help center is created which ultimately leads to the creation of Holokele, the Judiciary's court concierge program. The committee also establishes a court forms action committee to look into ways to simplify existing court forms.

April 29 - May 1, 1999, the Hawaii Supreme Court Committee on Equality and Access to the Courts hosts the Eleventh Annual National Consortium of Task Forces and Commissions on Racial and Ethnic Bias in the Courts.

The Committee receives a \$10,000 grant from the Foundation for the Improvement of Justice Award.

2000 - 2002

The Committee submits and receives a monetary grant from the Hawaii Justice Foundation for a two-year "Immigrant Access to the Courts" project. Along with a monetary award from the Foundation for the Improvement of Justice, a coordinator is hired for one year.

Projects include drafting and translating brochures providing legal information, translating the district court videos into additional languages, drafting, translating and recording additional scripts for the Multilingual Lawline, creating bus placards to reach non-English speakers and to publicize existing legal resources, recommending community language links for the Judiciary's website, examining cultural alternative dispute resolutions, and publicizing existing legal resources by hosting eight community meetings.