



News Release

FROM: Chambers of the Chief Judge
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COURT VOLUNTEER GOES INTERNATIONAL

Chief Judge James K. Booras was very proud to learn that Robert Zastany, the Executive Director of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, had been selected to participate in an international program sponsored by the National Center for State Courts. "I am not totally surprised that Zastany had been chosen for this project, as he has been recognized throughout the U. S. as an outstanding court executive who has made significant contributions in the field of judicial administration," said Booras.

The National Center for State Courts is implementing the Kosovo Justice Support Program under the direction and with funding from the United State Agency for International Development (USAID). The project is comprised of several components designed to promote the rule of law and establish an independent judiciary in Kosovo. One component of the program involves establishing a series of model courts and with successful lessons learned, best practices established and programs created by these model courts, the operations of additional courts across Kosovo will be enhanced.

The Model Courts Program provides robust support to ten courts across Kosovo with the overall goal of enhancing court management in the following areas: case and records management, fiscal management, personnel management, public access and

public outreach, asset management, organizational structure and, finally, workflow analysis. In order for this type of effort to be brought online in rapid fashion, Chief of Party Michael Sheppard and Model Court Project Director Michael Buenger developed a volunteer program for senior court executives. The program brings court executives to Kosovo on a voluntary basis and imbeds each of them with a local model court for a two week period with the objective of improving the operational capacity of the Kosovo judiciary.

Bob Zastany was selected for this voluntary assignment by the International Program Division of the National Center for State Courts and Michael Buenger, project director. He was assigned to the Municipal Court of Prizren, Kosovo from the 5th through the 20th of September. The court consisted of 13 trial judges and a court administrator who managed all of the support functions of the court, from courtroom clerks, process servers, and caseflow staff to judicial secretaries. Zastany stated, "I have taken some interesting vacations over the years and have worked in other foreign countries, but have never had such a rewarding and professionally fulfilling experience in the 33 years of working in the court system." Zastany also noted that his relationship with the project staff, the judges and court staff will continue in the future. "Volunteering has always been part of my life, from community organizations like Scouting and legion baseball to church and community based organizations. This will be slightly different in that the internet will be my link to continuing this amazing relationship."

"Zastany, who has been with the Lake County court system since April 1984, has made the 19th Judicial Circuit one of the most progressive court systems in the country," said Booras. In 1996, the National Center for State Courts presented Bob Zastany with the Distinguished Service Award. He has also been awarded the Lady of Justice Award from the National Association for Court Management on three occasions.

Zastany and his wife, Joyce, reside in Gurnee and have three grown children.

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