



THE ASSOCIATION FOR COURT COMMUNICATORS

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Dear Fellow Court Communications Professional:

Have you ever been confronted with a challenge involving the press -- a high profile trial, lack of interest in a new initiative, or how to create a successful event -- and felt like you had no idea where to begin? Believe me, I've been there, and it's no fun.

The good news, however, is that there's a network of talented, skilled and energetic court communications professionals who have faced similar situations and stand ready to serve as a resource for you. That organization is the Conference of Court Public Information Officers, of which I have the immense honor of serving as president.

CCPIO is a nearly 30-year-old international organization composed primarily of court PIOs from across the United States. It is a nonprofit organization affiliated with the National Center for State Courts. And while many of us carry the title of public information officer, our membership includes court administrators, managers, staff attorneys, education coordinators or some other similar title relating to dealing with the public directly or through the media.

We would like to extend an invitation to you -- and any colleagues of yours who have communications, education or outreach responsibilities -- to join CCPIO. Our members have a wealth of knowledge that we share with each other on a regular basis, and which is augmented by our previous experiences as journalists, court managers and public relations professionals. Moreover, whether it is a new initiative or a new problem that one of us is dealing with, other members are there to assist each other on a moment's notice.

From my 17 years as a CCPIO member, I can tell you first-hand that one of the most valuable tools provided by CCPIO is our listserv where members can instantly e-mail the entire group seeking answers to questions such as:

- Does a blogger qualify as a journalist under your cameras in the courtroom rules?
- Does your court require press credentials?
- What type of event did you have for a new courthouse grand opening or groundbreaking?
- What types of programs have other courts done for Law Day or Constitution Day?
- Does your court have a continuity of operations plan (COOP), crisis communications plan, strategic plan, communications plan, and if so, can you share it?

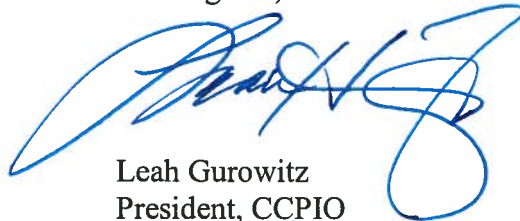
- Which courts are on which social media platforms and what do you do about critical comments?
- An unfair/inaccurate critique of a judge's decision is going viral, what should I do?

CCPIO also hosts an annual meeting/ conference each August at which court communications professionals learn about the latest trends, developments and strategies being used in courts across the country and around the world. We learn from experts in court management, communications, social media, media, information technology and other related fields. We share our greatest achievements and biggest challenges. Each year I am amazed at how much there is to learn and how helpful the conference is to me on a day-to-day basis.

Our next annual meeting will be held in Cleveland the beginning of the first full week of August 2019 and I would like to cordially invite you to attend. A one-year membership in CCPIO is included in the conference fee. Information is available at www.ccpio.org, where you can also find a list of current members.

I do hope you will join CCPIO. You'll find us to be an incredibly friendly, open group of people who are generous with our time and advice!

Best regards,



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