



THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
NORTHERN DISTRICT *of* OHIO

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Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Northern District of Ohio

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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U.S. Attorney's Office recognizes employees for outstanding work in 2019

The United States Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Ohio presented awards to honor exceptional advocacy, support and legal work on behalf of the district's six million residents in 2019.

"These awards recognize the best efforts put forth by our office on behalf of the citizens of the Northern District," said U.S. Attorney Justin Herdman. "Whether it's combating violent crime, protecting taxpayers, trying to curb the tide of the opioid epidemic, just to name a few, these employees embody the best of public service."

Details of the award winners are below:

Graduates of the Cleveland Federal Community Leadership Institute (CFCLI): Antoinette Burrell, Angelia Johnson and Crystal Williamson

The Cleveland Federal Community Leadership Institute is a program designed to develop leaders among Cleveland's federal agencies. This program gives students opportunities to network with like-minded leaders in the Cleveland area, develop effective teamwork skills, and design a community outreach project. This year, the Northern District had three graduates: Antoinette Burrell, Angelia Johnson and Crystal Williamson. Congratulations, graduates.

Wings of Excellence Award: Jeanette Albrecht and Michelle Baeppler

The purpose of this award is to recognize those employees whose outstanding performances, either on or off the job, have served as an inspiration to others and/or brought credit to the Federal service. Awardees may be recognized for on-the-job performance, community service, or both.

Jeanette Albrecht has been with the Northern District since 2014. She was hired as a Legal Assistant in the Civil Division, where she supported several Assistant U.S. Attorneys in the Financial Litigation and Defensive Units. She assisted in mentoring new legal assistants and has never missed an opportunity to support other personnel within the division.

Michelle Baeppler has handled some of the office's most notable prosecutions. She joined the U.S. Attorney's Office in 2007 as an Assistant U.S. Attorney and has since prosecuted a myriad of criminal cases,

including narcotics trafficking, firearms, bank robbery, terrorism, national security and civil rights matters. She has served as the Deputy Chief of the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) Unit and is currently the Branch Chief for the Akron office.

Congratulations, Jeanette and Michelle.

2020 Franklin A. Polk Public Servant Award: Renee Mackey.

Renee Mackey has been recognized by the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association for demonstrating outstanding service to the legal profession, the general public, and the justice system. These merit awards are given for long and faithful service, devotion to duty, wise counsel, and unfailing patience. Renee has worked tirelessly on behalf of the Northern District's six million residents for the past 31 years and is an exemplary public servant. Congratulations, Renee.

The Bill Edwards Career Award: Jim Morford

Jim Morford is honored for over 30 years of exceptional federal service. Jim began his career as an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney in Montgomery County and joined the Northern District in 1991. Jim is an Assistant U.S. Attorney who oversees the district's forfeiture division. Jim is widely considered an expert and leading authority on all things related to both criminal and civil forfeiture. Jim's division consistently nets forfeiture results that far exceed districts much larger than Ohio Northern. Congratulations, Jim.

The Roberta Sladick Career Award: Cindy Jenkins.

Cindy is described as an "invaluable asset" and "one of the best employees the U.S. Attorney's Office has had over her long career." Cindy is a leader, mentor and trainer. Cindy has trained countless new employees as they have joined the Criminal Division and is always ready to help and fill in for anyone who needs help, and she has a hands-on approach when it comes to completing the mission. Congratulations, Cindy.

Excellence in Criminal Advocacy: Dan Riedl, Duncan Brown, Om Kakani, Matt Kall and Michelle McEwen

This year's recipients are awarded the Excellence in Criminal Advocacy award for their unwavering commitment and professionalism demonstrated throughout trial. Congratulations to Dan, Duncan, Om, Matt and Michelle.

Excellence in Civil Advocacy: Renee Bacchus, James Bennett, Karen Swanson Haan, Twana Rogers and Devin Zabarsky.

This year's recipients are recognized for their legal skills and adaptability while protecting the United States, and their shining example of professionalism in the face of national headlines and unexpected challenging circumstances. The team used keen legal knowledge and exceptional judgment in meeting, conferring, and negotiating with both the Plaintiffs and defense counsel, the Special Masters, the Court and numerous agency officials and attorneys. Congratulations to Renee, James, Karen, Twana and Devin.

Excellence in Criminal Support: Allison Kretz

Allison Kretz is such an instrumental part of the Northern District's Criminal Division. Many of the office's 2019 success stories would not have happened without Allison. She is approachable, knowledgeable, easy to work with, encouraging and patient. She leads by example and becomes an integral part of every team to which she is assigned. But more important than helping the office, Allison assists the victim community that the district serves. Congratulations, Allison.

Excellence in Civil Support: Donna Stroffolino

Donna Stroffolino is awarded this year's "Excellence in Civil Support" award for providing support on high-volume foreclosure matters and doing so in a timely manner. The foreclosure unit files in 17 different state courts, has approximately 1500 cases pending and bring in over \$1M a year. Donna helps manage the unit's workload by assessing and reviewing each foreclosure complaint and coordinating with the respective agencies in order to enable the office to file an answer or response. Congratulations, Donna.

Excellence in Paralegal Support: Jen Boshier

Jen Boshier is awarded this year's "Excellence in Paralegal Support" award for her meticulous work and exemplary attention to detail. Jen has worked as a paralegal for the past 10-plus years and has demonstrated exceptional writing ability and the aptitude to handle large and complex discovery productions. Congratulations, Jen.

Excellence in Administrative Support: Annette Coreno

Annette is recognized for her positive attitude and willingness to assist whoever calls or walks through the door. Annette manages multiple duties and tasks throughout the day and handles all of her assignments with a pleasant attitude and smile. Congratulations, Annette.

New Assistant U.S. Attorney Award: Elliot Morrison

In the few short years that Elliot has been with the Northern District office, he has demonstrated outstanding written and oral advocacy skills, thorough and meticulous approach to case development and prosecution, and has earned numerous convictions and significant trial accomplishments. During 2019, AUSA Morrison worked tirelessly on cases involving public corruption and drug trafficking. AUSA Morrison is a conscientious, dedicated and thorough advocate and deserves recognition by his peers as this year's New Assistant U.S. Attorney award recipient. Congratulations, Elliot.

New Legal Support Award: Chiquita Bonner

Chiquita's work ethic and professionalism have earned her this year's New Legal Support award. Chiquita is always ready to say yes to a project, a quick learner, and values her time and others. Chiquita strives to represent the office with professionalism, honesty, and integrity and readily volunteers her time to assist with the planning of events, such as the diversity and outreach programs, holiday events, etc. Congratulations, Chiquita.

The Jane Corrigan Award: Anthony Myers

This award recognizes a supportive staff member who is always professional, ready to help others in the performance of their duties, who expresses a "can-do" attitude, and whose demeanor is always engaging. Anthony receives this year's award for going out of his way to assist others, ensuring that his work is professional and error-free, and addressing deficiencies in internal processes. Congratulations, Anthony.

The Craig Tame Award for Excellence in Community Outreach: Marlon Primes

Marlon is the recipient of the first-ever Craig Tame Award for Excellence in Community Outreach. Marlon is a true leader – both in the office and throughout our community. He has been a champion for Cleveland's youth for several years as he has advanced and supported the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association's 3R's program – teaching high school-aged students about their rights and responsibilities as reflected in the U.S. Constitution. Marlon organizes an annual field trip for students to visit the federal courthouse and experience a moot court opportunity. Additionally, he has been a long-standing member of the Office's Diversity and Outreach committee, leading all of us by example. He is described by his peers in many positive ways, including being described as good-natured, exceptionally kind, and "having a heart of gold and the patience of a saint." Congratulations, Marlon.

Administrative Employee of the Year: Jeff Oleyar

Jeff receives this year's award for his role in helping the office navigate the information technology challenges posed by remote-working due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Even before the pandemic, Jeff provided the office with knowledgeable, timely, and friendly service and support. Congratulations, Jeff.

Legal Support Employee of the Year: Rowenda Dellisanti

Rowenda provides outstanding support to all civil Assistant U.S. Attorneys in the Toledo Branch Office. Rowenda is the primary Legal Assistant for two Civil Assistant U.S. Attorneys, provides backup support when necessary, and also supports the bankruptcy and medicare unit, two high-volume areas. Well-organized and meticulous, Rowenda exhibits exceptional skills in all areas of civil litigation support. This includes the difficult and sometimes tedious tasks associated with civil discovery. Congratulations, Rowenda.

Assistant U.S. Attorney of the Year: Margaret Sweeney

Margaret Sweeney is this year's Assistant U.S. Attorney of the Year. Margaret's attention and dedication to her work resulted in 77 defendants charged last year, with several of these matters being significant prosecutions resulting from complex, long-term investigations.

Notable accomplishments in 2019 include:

- The first trial in this district for a fentanyl analogue under the mandatory minimum statute. It was also then the largest carfentanil seizure with 200 grams of carfentanil found.
- Indicting the leader of a drug trafficking organization that, for at least 10 years, has been trafficking upwards of 200 kilos of cocaine into the Northern District.

In 2019, Margaret was selected to be the lead Strike Force attorney for the newly created Cleveland Strike Force. In addition, she coordinates the summer intern program and mentors new Assistant U.S. Attorneys. Her colleagues describe Margaret as motivating, thoughtful and keenly observant of details. Congratulations, Margaret.

Component(s):

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