

Addressing Jail Use Through Prompt Case Resolution

Speaker Biographies

The Hon. Melisa De La Garza was raised in Las Vegas and received her Bachelor of Science with a degree in Criminal Justice at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Judge De La Garza obtained her Juris Doctorate from the Creighton University School of Law in Omaha, Nebraska. She was the first Law Clerk for the Las Vegas Township, Justice Court. Upon passing the bar, she was hired by District Attorney Stew Bell, and she prosecuted cases for 8 years as a Deputy District Attorney. She continued as a trial attorney in the Public Defender's Office for the next three years before opening her own law practice. During that time, she was also a Pro Tem in North Las Vegas and Henderson. Judge De La Garza returned to the County in 2010 as a Hearing Master for Eighth Judicial District Court. In June 2018, Judge De La Garza was elected as the first Justice of the Peace in Las Vegas Township, Justice Court, Department 15. In September 2024, Judge De La Garza was elected by her colleagues to be Chief Judge of Las Vegas Justice Court.

Jesse Jannetta is a senior policy fellow in the Justice and Safety Division at the Urban Institute, where he leads projects on gun violence reduction initiatives, prison and jail reentry, local justice reform, and community supervision. He directs Urban's work as a partner in the Safety and Justice Challenge, is co-principal investigator for the Evaluation of Oakland's Measure Z Services, and is a member of the leadership team for the Prison Research and Innovation Initiative. He was previously principal investigator for the Developing a Research-Based Practice Guide to Prevent Youth Gun and Gang Violence project, co-lead for the Community Violence Intervention Research and Evaluation Training and Technical Assistance Center, project director for the Transition from Jail to Community initiative, process and fidelity assessment lead for the evaluation of the National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice, and co-principal investigator for evaluations of the Los Angeles Gang Reduction and Youth Development strategy and the Chicago Violence Reduction Strategy. He applies mixed-methods approaches to process and impact evaluations and provides technical assistance to state and local jurisdictions. Before joining Urban, Jannetta was a research specialist at the Center for Evidence-Based Corrections at the University of California, Irvine. He evaluated GPS monitoring for parolees, analyzed parole discharge and violation response policies, measured the scope of correctional control in California, and assessed inmate and parolee programs against evidence-based program design principles. Jannetta holds a BA in political science from the University of Michigan and an MPP from the Harvard Kennedy School.

Linsey LaMontagne has over 25 years of experience in the field of criminal justice, beginning her career in February 2000 as a Corrections Officer in the Michigan Department of Corrections. From 2000 through 2008 Linsey worked in both male and female facilities, delivering cognitive restructuring programs to housed offenders. In 2008 Linsey promoted to the Office of Community Corrections, as a Grant Coordinator where she helped various counties develop comprehensive plans that focused on pretrial through post release programming. Ms. LaMontagne's experience includes the development, design, and implementation of programs which act as alternatives to incarceration. While at the Office of Community Corrections, she promoted to Manager where her and her team were responsible for the oversight of nearly 300 programs throughout the State of Michigan. In addition, she has worked as a consultant and technical assistance provider for state, federal and private agencies. She has delivered programs directly to offenders as a contracted service provider in jail and community-based corrections settings. Linsey is

currently the Director of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Counsel, in Clark County Nevada, where she has been tasked with making considerable changes within community corrections, including the advancement in the use of compliance technology and program reform. Ms. LaMontagne has earned a Bachelor's degree in Family Education, a Master's degree in Management and Leadership and Doctorate in Public Administration.

The Hon. Diana Sullivan was born and raised in Las Vegas. She earned her bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice at the University of Nevada Reno in 1989 magna cum laude and her Juris Doctor degree at the University of San Diego School of Law in 1992. She started practicing law at Jones Vargas and became a partner in 2001. In 2004 she opened the law firm of Ghanem & Sullivan. During her 16 years of civil practice, Judge Sullivan practiced business, real estate, and commercial landlord/tenant law, presided as a private arbitrator, sat as chair of the Clark County Bar Association Community Services Committee, and provided bono civil representation for litigants who could not afford a lawyer. Judge Sullivan was elected to the Las Vegas Justice Court bench in Department 12 in 2008 and was re-elected in 2014 and 2020. During her time on the bench, she has handled both criminal, civil and eviction dockets. She sat as chair of the Local Rules Committee for over 10 years, was the Presiding Criminal Judge for several years, and is currently the Vice-Chief of the court. Judge Sullivan regularly speaks to and teaches at various panels and classes pertinent to matters within justice court's jurisdiction. She mentored for the Clark County School District for several years in the "Reclaim Your Future Program" and partnered with Boyd Law School legal clinics for several semesters. Judge Sullivan had held various board positions with the the Nevada Judges of Limited Jurisdiction Association, including President in 2020, and received their honor of "Outstanding Judge of the Year" in 2017. Judge Sullivan has been published in the Clark County Bar Association's and National Judicial College's publications, as well as a university textbook for criminal justice. On a personal level, she likes to travel and watch and attend various professional and college sports events including football, basketball, baseball, and hockey.

Ed Wells began serving as Court Manager for the Harris County Office of Court Management in 2011, having served as Assistant Court Manager for the three previous years. Prior to this position, Mr. Wells was Clerk of the Court at the Texas Fourteenth Court of Appeals from 2000-2008. Mr. Wells began his career in the courts employed by Galveston County as Court MIS Director and then as Director of the Office of Justice Administration. He has a BBA from the University of Houston - Clear Lake. In May 2006, Mr. Wells completed the National Center for State Courts' Court Executive Development Program and is a Fellow of the Institute for Court Management. Mr. Wells serves on the Justice Management Institute's Board of Directors, the Texas Supreme Court Judicial Committee on Information Technology and Judicial Administration Specialization Task Force, the National Center for State Courts' Institute for Court Management (ICM) Advisory Board, the National Association for Presiding Judges and Court Executive Officers Board of Directors, and is Chair of Continuing Education for the Texas Association for Court Administration. Ed has received the Justice Charles W. Barrow Award for contributions to the profession of court administration in Texas, the Texas Center for the Judiciary's Outstanding Non-Judicial Faculty Award, and the Justice Management Institute's Ernest C. Friesen Award. In 2024 Mr. Wells completed the Judicial Executive Leadership program for the National Judicial College and Harvard Law School Executive Education program.