

WATCH



POST

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WATCH report on findings from survey of Hennepin County criminal justice system personnel | What's New

By Marna Anderson and Heather Wolfgram

Introduction

To evaluate the impact of court monitoring on the criminal justice system and the effectiveness of its programs, WATCH has conducted two surveys of Hennepin County criminal justice system personnel over the years, the first in 1999, and the second in 2007. Both surveys asked respondents about their impressions of WATCH and their opinion of WATCH's impact on the criminal justice system. This article summarizes the results of the 2007 survey. A full report with comparative data from the 1999 and 2007 surveys is available on the WATCH website at www.watchmn.org.

WATCH used Survey Monkey, an electronic survey tool, to distribute 341 surveys to members of the criminal justice system: district court judges, prosecutors in the Violent Crimes Division of the county attorney's office, defense attorneys in the public defender's office, advocates/crime victim liaisons in the county attorney's office, and probation officers.¹ Electronic surveys were completed by 126 individuals for an overall response rate of 37%. The largest number of respondents was probation officers (49), followed by judges (33), defense attorneys (25), prosecutors (14), and advocates/crime victim liaisons (5).

¹ It was WATCH's intention to reach all justice system personnel, however, some individuals may have been missed due to inaccurate email addresses or similar malfunctions.

Familiarity with WATCH

Ninety-one percent of respondents indicated that they are familiar with WATCH. To gauge whether respondents had a clear idea about WATCH's purpose, the survey asked them to describe in their own words what WATCH does. One hundred and four individuals responded, and 78% of them accurately described WATCH as a volunteer organization that monitors court processes, reports on its observations, and offers feedback and recommendations to criminal justice personnel.

Responses ranged from the comprehensive (*"WATCH sends volunteers to court who are readily identified by the red clipboards they carry in the courtroom to monitor cases where women and children were crime victims in order to make the system more accountable and more victim-centered"*) to the abbreviated (*"observes or monitors" court*).

Many respondents offered favorable opinions of WATCH's work and its monitors. For example, one individual wrote, *"WATCH is the public conscience, the eyes and ears of the community. [They are] the intelligent, thoughtful, watchful guardians of a fair and responsive judiciary. When I see*

Staff news

In January we said good-bye to Volunteer Coordinator Shahidah Siraaj, who moved to Ohio. Shahidah joined WATCH in April 2005 as an administrative assistant and became the volunteer coordinator six months later. During her tenure, Shahidah implemented an outreach program to attract a more diverse pool of volunteers to WATCH, and we saw the number of volunteers of color rise dramatically as a result of her efforts. She had a way of easily connecting with volunteers, making them feel comfortable asking questions and providing feedback.

Shahidah represented WATCH at conferences and community events. She developed and conducted training sessions on domestic violence and understanding the Muslim worldview. We wish her all the best and thank her for her many contributions to WATCH.

Filling in for the Volunteer Coordinator position is Anita Gopalaswamy, who most recently worked at Avenues for Homeless Youth managing volunteers and coordinating fundraising and special events. Anita has extensive experience in program development and evaluation, and we are very excited she has joined the staff on a temporary basis.

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Courtroom delays follow-up

By Marna Anderson

Between the months of July and November 2007 WATCH did a follow-up study on courtroom delays at the Hennepin County Government Center. Our initial study was conducted from January through March and findings were published in the Spring 2007 issue of the *WATCH Post*. To see it and other newsletters and reports, go to www.watchmn.org.

In the most recent study, WATCH monitors noted an increase in the number of hearings that started on time, though approximately 95% of hearings we monitored began well after the scheduled start time. This will come as no surprise to those working in the system. Delayed hearings are a source of frustration to most justice system personnel and our monitors overheard many comments to that effect.

In the following three instances, monitors overheard attorneys complaining about delays:

- *This is such crap. You have to wait here all day to have a 5 minute trial heard.*
- *Every day I come here at 8:30, and every day I don't leave until noon. Every day — for one omnibus hearing.*
- *I was here yesterday and didn't have my 9:30 [hearing] until noon.*

In the follow-up study, WATCH monitors noted that judges more frequently apologized from the bench for delays and offered explanations to people waiting. One monitor note read: *Court started late, but the judge apologized and explained reasons why — he had a jury out and had to answer a juror's question. The judge said he expects everyone in the justice system to be on time including himself.* Another monitor noted a judge telling the public that court was behind *because the deputies are short staffed.*

Short staffed. While there are many

reasons for courtroom delays, the one that stands out is the lack of adequate staff. There are not enough judges, attorneys or deputies to handle the number of cases going through Hennepin County courts. WATCH founder Susan Lenfestey wrote an article *Do Tight Budgets Mean Loose Justice?* for the *WATCH Post* (Summer, 2007) describing how Local Government Aid (LGA) reductions are impacting the justice system, particularly related to the Minneapolis Police Department and City Attorney's Office. At the WATCH gala on November 8, 2007, guest speaker former Supreme Court Justice Kathleen Blatz said that Minnesota would need over 100 additional judges to bring case loads in line with national standards.

The lack of government funds available for our justice system is a problem that affects everyone and it is apparent in several ways — from the decision to close public information services each Wednesday afternoon in Hennepin County to terminating contracts with agencies providing supervised visitation through family court.

There are not easy answers to dealing with the lack of funds or easy solutions to reduce courtroom delays. But they are part of the same puzzle and the courts should attempt to implement scheduling protocols that reduce courtroom delays and to continue communicating with the waiting public.

We made the following recommendations in last year's *WATCH Post* and are repeating them here. Scheduling problems can become so overwhelming that it is hard to know where to begin to solve them. In addition to advocating for increases in public funding for the courts, we believe some interim measures could provide short-term solutions.

- Scheduling changes should be posted on courtroom doors.

- Signs telling the public to use the phones near the elevators to check on a case should be posted in courtrooms and near the elevators.
- Clerks should check with people in the courtroom to see which case they are waiting for and inform them of any changes to the schedule.
- Judges should apologize and explain the reason for the delay at the beginning of a hearing when it starts more than half an hour after the scheduled time.
- The Public Defender's Office and County Attorney's Office should develop communication protocol and expectations when there are multiple appearances or unexpected schedule changes.
- The bench should enforce timeliness.
- Attorneys and judges should avoid scheduling multiple appearances for the same time whenever possible and work together to figure out courtroom schedules that facilitate promptness.

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Board news

We also bid a fond farewell to Glenda Dewberry Rooney, who joined the WATCH board in January 2002. Our by-laws require board members to rotate off the board after three consecutive terms, something that makes sense in theory, but is always hard in practice when it means saying goodbye to a good friend.

Glenda served on both the governance and personnel committees, and for the past two years served as the board vice-chair. As chair of the governance committee, Glenda provided leadership to advance WATCH's diversity efforts, promote strong board/staff relations, and increase WATCH's visibility in new communities. She held strongly to her own opinions, but liked to dig out the views of others as well, and she laced her leadership with humor.

She has promised to stay connected to our work and we look forward to seeing her at WATCH events and utilizing her expertise on a more informal basis.

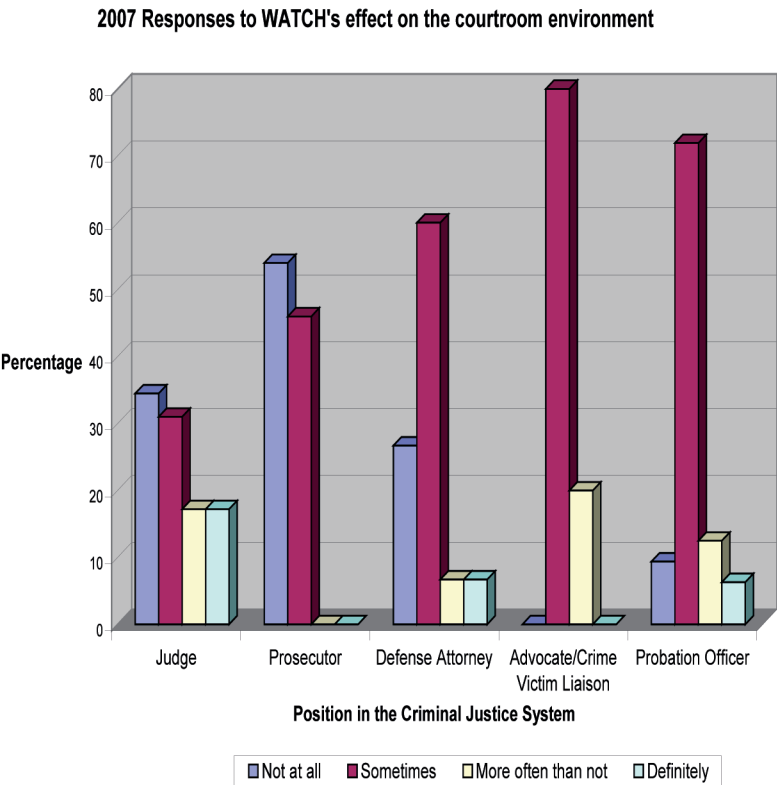
someone with a red clipboard in the courtroom, I appreciate that a volunteer took the time to monitor the quality of justice that day.”

Effect on courtroom environment

Respondents were asked, “Do you feel that WATCH’s presence had an effect on the courtroom environment?”*2

The majority (59.6%) of respondents indicated that WATCH’s presence “sometimes” had an effect on the courtroom environment; the fewest respondents (8.5%) indicated that WATCH “definitely” had an effect on the courtroom environment. When broken down by position, judges (17.2%) most frequently indicated that WATCH’s presence “definitely” had an effect on the courtroom environment, while prosecutors (54%) most frequently indicated that WATCH’s presence had no effect on the courtroom environment.

Table 1 Responses to WATCH’s effect on the courtroom environment



Respondents were asked to provide examples of how they felt WATCH’s presence affected the courtroom environment. Sixty-four individuals responded; the majority (31) stated that WATCH’s presence promotes accountability or makes the courtroom environment more professional. They described criminal justice professionals as being more respectful and diligent and more conscious of their actions and interactions when WATCH is present. This group felt people conduct themselves differently when they know they are being “watched.” One individual noted, “When you see WATCH in the courtroom, you know that the ‘public’ is watching; therefore, it’s a nice reminder that you (the criminal justice personnel) are serving the public as a whole. I personally have observed courtrooms with and

2 Questions marked with a single asterisk (*) required responses on a 4-point scale (1-not at all, 2-sometimes, 3-more often than not, 4-definitely).

Case summaries

The following brief summaries describe cases WATCH monitors have recently observed.

Charles Alexander Darmer

On January 17, 2007, officers responded to a call regarding a shooting. Charles Darmer’s girlfriend, KW, was at his house watching television and looked up to see Darmer pointing a shotgun at her head, which he then fired. KW suffered severe trauma to the head, including a punctured ear drum and internal bleeding.

Darmer was charged with three felonies: first degree attempted murder, second degree attempted murder, and second degree assault. He pleaded guilty to first and second degree attempted murder. Judge Steven Pihlaja sentenced him to 216 months in prison stayed for 20 years with the following conditions: serve 365 days in the workhouse, attend Alcoholics Anonymous, have no contact with the victim, pay restitution, remain law abiding, maintain employment, complete psychological evaluation/treatment, and wear an alcohol monitor. Krista Bettinger was the prosecuting attorney, and Mary Moriarty was the defense attorney in this case.

Richard Monroe Scheibe

Richard Scheibe was charged with first degree murder in the shooting death of AW, the mother of his infant child. On August 21, 2006, officers responded to a call from EP (AW’s boyfriend), who told police that AW had agreed to meet with Scheibe at a church parking lot in Bloomington to receive a child support check from him. When AW did not return EP’s calls that afternoon, he drove to the church parking lot and found her shot to death in her car.

Scheibe pleaded guilty to first degree murder and was sentenced by Judge Regina Chu to life in prison with the possibility of parole in 30 years. He was given credit for 455 days served and ordered to submit a DNA sample and pay restitution. The prosecuting attorney was

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without WATCH present; there is a remarkable difference.”

Twelve respondents indicated that WATCH’s presence is intimidating and somewhat negative. One respondent wrote, “*I do not think WATCH’s presence is always entirely positive. While it isn’t a stated part of their mission, some parts of the program have an unmistakable attempt to intimidate judges.*”

Behavioral impacts

The survey asked respondents, “*Do you notice a change in the behavior of judges, prosecutors, or defense attorneys when a WATCH monitor is present?*”³ Eighty-nine individuals responded to this question indicating that they were most likely to observe changes in the behavior of judges and least likely to observe changes in the behavior of defense attorneys. Prosecutors noticed the most change in the behavior of others, defense attorneys the least. Most notably, no defense attorneys noticed behavioral changes in one another, though many did notice changes in the behavior of prosecutors and judges. Both judges and prosecutors indicated that they observe changes in the behavior of all parties when WATCH is present.

Table 2 Behavior changes noticed by court personnel

These respondents	noticed a change in these individuals when a WATCH monitor is present.		
	Judge/Referee	Prosecutor	Defense Attorney
Judge	37.5%	42.9%	24%
Prosecutor	61.5%	61.5%	41.7%
Defense Attorney	58.3%	41.7%	0.0%

Responses to the survey indicate that criminal justice professionals are more likely to observe changes in the behavior of others than they are in their own behavior. The survey asked, “*Do you notice a change in your own behavior when you observe a WATCH monitor in the courtroom?*” Forty-seven respondents said the presence of WATCH does not affect their own behavior in the courtroom. Some in this group described themselves as professionals who always aspire to do their best, regardless of who is present or “watching.” One individual wrote, “*I am confident that I have weighed community safety issues and the defendants’ needs and circumstances and have made recommendations to the best of my ability.*”

Twenty respondents indicated there is a change in their own behavior when WATCH is present, describing how being monitored makes them more accountable. Specifically, they wrote that they take extra time to explain court terminology and procedures to the public and to WATCH monitors, while being more professional in the courtroom. One individual reflected, “*Yes. It reminds me to explain terminology and the reasons for certain procedures. It reminds me to explain what has been going on while people were waiting and why that was.*”

Overall impact

The survey asked respondents to, “*Rate your opinion regarding the overall impact of WATCH on the criminal justice system in Hennepin County.*”³ The majority (70.7%) of respondents believe that the overall impact of WATCH on the criminal

³ This question required responses on a 5-point scale (1-significantly negative, 2-somewhat negative, 3-no impact, 4-somewhat positive, 5-significantly positive).

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Paul Scoggin, and the defense attorney was Eric Hawkins.

Valjean Joseph Popowski

On November 9, 2006, Minneapolis Police responded to an assault in progress. A witness, TC, observed Valjean Popowski strike JH, Popowski’s ex-girlfriend, several times and then stomp on her head after she fell to the ground. JH sustained extensive injuries from the assault, including a brain injury. Popowski was found guilty of first degree assault in a court trial presided over by Judge Kathryn Quaintance, who sentenced him to 150 months in prison with credit for 405 days served. He was also ordered to pay restitution. The prosecuting attorney was Elizabeth Cutter, and the defense attorney was John Ryan, III.

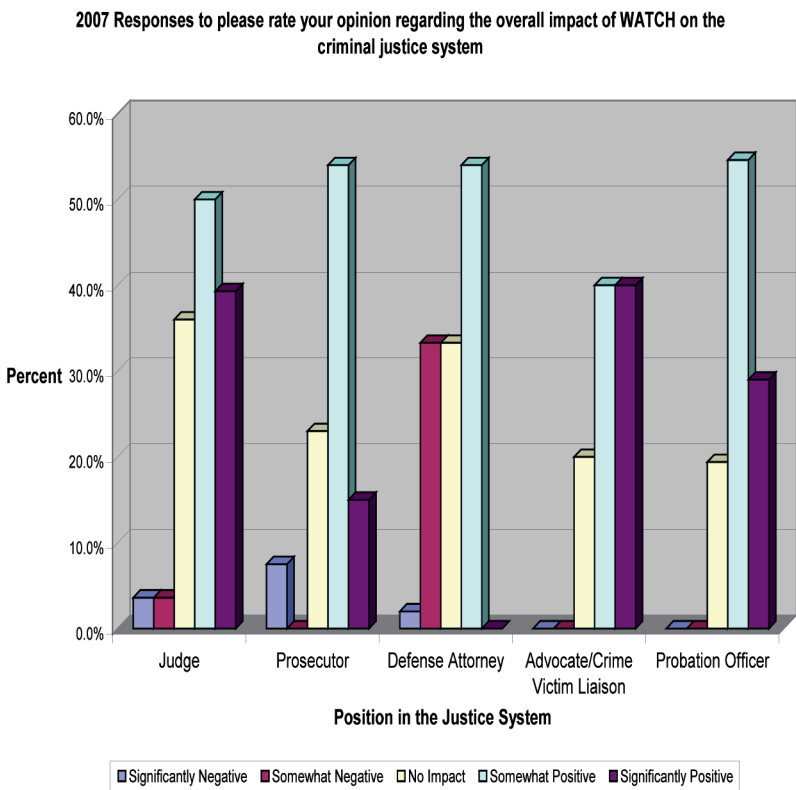
Richard Dale Fairbanks

On November 11, 2006, AF went to Richard Fairbanks’ home to pick up her son, who was visiting his father. During an argument, Fairbanks pushed AF down a flight of stairs and continued to assault her as she tried to leave. The following day, Fairbanks twice drove his car into AF as she was standing in her driveway, pinning her against her car. When AF’s father came to her aid by dragging her into the garage, Fairbanks accelerated again, hitting both of them with his car.

Fairbanks was charged with three felonies: first degree attempted murder, second degree attempted murder, and second degree assault. He pleaded guilty to first degree attempted murder and one count of second degree assault. Judge Allen Oleisky sentenced him to 161.5 months in prison with credit for 191 days served and also ordered him to submit a DNA sample. The prosecuting attorney was Hilary Caligiuri and the defense attorney was Davi Axelson.

justice system is positive, and less than 20% indicated that WATCH has “no impact.” Fewer still (11.9%) indicated that WATCH’s overall impact is negative. All of the advocates, three quarters of probation officers, and one half of judges responding perceive WATCH’s impact as positive. Conversely, over half of the defense attorneys and less than a quarter of responding judges and county attorneys perceive WATCH’s impact as negative.

Table 3 Please rate your opinion regarding the overall impact of WATCH on the criminal justice system in Hennepin County



Effective organization

The last question of the survey asked respondents, “*What suggestions do you have for WATCH as it seeks to become a more effective organization?*” Thirty-five individuals responded to this question. The majority (17%) of respondents believe WATCH needs to increase its presence in court, specifically in non-felony cases, and to begin monitoring domestic violence cases in the suburban courts. The next largest group (14%) encouraged WATCH to be more visible by bringing issues to the public eye more often via the media and presentations. Some in this group suggested that WATCH increase its communication with criminal justice personnel and encouraged WATCH to include the perspectives of all parties, particularly those of the defense, in its publications. Another individual advised, “*Stay away from blame and hostility. WATCH’s strength over the years has been that it came at issues from an approach of wanting to make positive changes and wanting to work with the system for improvement.*”

Conclusion

WATCH appreciates the time respondents took to complete the survey and intends to use the results to continue to carry out its mission and to promote court

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Join our March Webinar

Each year, WATCH hosts internet seminars geared to strengthen court monitoring efforts around the country. The next seminar, *Managing Volunteer Court Monitors*, will be held on Tuesday, March 18, 2008, at 11:30 a.m. CST. Webinars are offered at a reduced cost to members of the National Association of Court Monitoring Programs. For more information, visit www.watchmn.org or contact Dawn at 612-341-2747, x 3, or ddougherty@watchmn.org.

Mailing List Correction

We need your help to maintain an up-to-date newsletter mailing list. Please contact us if:

- You would like to be added to the mailing list
- You have moved or changed employment
- You would rather receive an electronic copy of the newsletter than a paper one
- You would like to receive multiple copies of the newsletter for your office or department
- You would like to be removed from the mailing list

Call 612-341-2747, x 1 or email watch@watchmn.org. We appreciate your help in ensuring accurate delivery of the *WATCH Post*. Thank you.

Volunteer with WATCH

Are you looking for a way to make a difference? Are you interested in what goes on in court? Train to become a WATCH volunteer. WATCH provides training, and you donate 4 hours each month to monitor the courts. The spring training is on Saturday, March 1, 2008, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Contact Anita at (612) 341-2747, ext. 2 or anita@watchmn.org for more information.

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Gifts from individuals are a significant source of income for WATCH. We are grateful for the generosity of individual donors, some new to WATCH this year and many who have been loyal supporters since our inception. Please accept our heartfelt thanks for your generosity. If you would like to make a donation before our fiscal year ends on June 30, you may use the envelope in this newsletter, or go to the donate page at www.watchmn.org. Please feel free to call the office at 612-341-2747 if you have any questions.

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monitoring and the WATCH model around the country. The thoughtful comments from respondents serve as a strong indicator that public scrutiny of the courts results in an improved justice system. WATCH credits any success to date to the fact that many people working in the Hennepin County courts are open to hearing and acting on WATCH's feedback and building collaborations with community organizations to make lasting changes.

The WATCH Board of Directors and staff discussed the survey results at the annual meeting in January. Reviewing the survey results was helpful in determining future projects and strategies and in considering new ways of approaching our mission. Below are some of the suggestions WATCH received.

- **Provide more feedback to criminal justice personnel.** Respondents, particularly judges, want specific feedback on the things WATCH monitors feel they are doing well/poorly.
- **Increase communication with criminal justice personnel.** Respondents indicated a desire for more open communication with WATCH to respond to questions, educate monitors on the inner workings of the criminal justice system, provide insight into case specifics, and prevent waits for cases that have been rescheduled.
- **Increase presence of WATCH monitors.** Respondents would like to see WATCH monitors present at more non-felony cases, non-domestic cases, and family court matters. Requests were also made for WATCH's presence in the suburbs.
- **Focus on the positive.** Respondents encouraged WATCH to acknowledge the many positive things that go on in court.
- **Be more active/do more.** Respondents indicated that WATCH needs to be specific about behaviors and practices of court personnel that it feels should change. Requests were made for WATCH to increase its media presence while taking more of a stance on egregious cases and addressing judicial misconduct.
- **Focus/highlight different issues in the criminal justice system.** Respondents suggested WATCH take an interest in studies on poverty and inequality in sentencings in addition to its focus on victim issues and outcomes.
- **Include all perspectives.** Respondents felt that WATCH should incorporate opposing views in its articles and reports before they are published.
- **Increase distribution of the WATCH Post and WATCH reports.** Respondents suggested that WATCH include all criminal justice personnel on its mailing list and make publications available in break rooms and at the courthouse. They also suggested sending copies of newly released reports to the media and marketing its website.
- **Increase follow-up with criminal justice personnel.** Respondents felt WATCH should request meetings with attorneys, judges, and probation officers to get commitments from them on what steps they intend to take to respond to WATCH's recommendations.
- **Increase objectivity.** Respondents advised WATCH to be careful of political and ideological bents and to use less pejorative language.

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WATCH is grateful for the generous support of the following private foundations in 2007.

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We appreciate the following employers who matched employee gifts or recognized employee volunteer hours with donations to WATCH in 2007.

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Wells Fargo Community Support Campaign

The year in review

In 2007, WATCH monitors provided a daily presence in Hennepin County courts and staff served on committees to provide input to improve the justice system's response to violence against women and children. We studied the effects of Minnesota's new felony domestic strangulation law and shared what we learned with others via conferences and publications. In addition to our focus here, WATCH greatly expanded its national work last year, providing individual technical assistance to 13 groups from ten states.

Daily court monitoring

WATCH volunteer monitors represent the public, reminding the court of its responsibility to serve its community fairly and respectfully. In 2007, WATCH monitored more than 6,500 hearings involving cases of violence against women and children.

WATCH held three volunteer training sessions in 2007, resulting in 62 new volunteers and interns. All told, volunteers donated more than 2,600 hours of their time last year. Throughout 2007, WATCH recruited student interns, who volunteered on average two to three days per week. This concentrated time commitment allowed them to contribute to research projects, newsletter articles, and data collection in addition to gaining extensive experience monitoring court proceedings. Many interns were law school students, who reported receiving an invaluable introduction to issues of violence against women and children through working with WATCH.

The Lois Bishop Student of Color Internship Program entered its second year in 2007, providing a stipend for a college student to intern at WATCH. The 2007 intern, Nashad Muse, was hired in early fall to fill an open staff position, and a new student took her place in November. The internship is proving to be an effective avenue for developing leadership in young people of color, while broadening our understanding of the barriers facing people of color in the justice system.

Court timeliness project

Last spring, WATCH undertook a short-term study of the frequency and impact of courtroom delays. During a three-month period, monitors observed 177 hearings, only two of which started on time. In 133 of the hearings monitors were unable to document the reason for the delay because it was never stated in court. Our recommendations included prominent posting of schedule changes, frequent announcements regarding the status of cases, clear explanations and apologies for delays, and changes to the scheduling system to prevent delays.

National recognition

WATCH was honored in July by the Mary Byron Foundation with its *Celebrating Solutions* award. WATCH was one of four awardees selected from more than 200 nominees nationwide. The award recognizes innovative approaches to preventing domestic violence and came with a \$10,000 grant.

Community education, training, and outreach

Last year, WATCH presented sessions at the International Girls Summit, hosted visitors from several countries through the International Institute, and presented information on court monitoring to a neighborhood group in northeast Minneapolis interested in establishing a monitoring program.

On a national scale, WATCH staff made presentations at four national or international conferences, reaching 187 professionals with information about court monitoring for systems change. A summary of WATCH's felony strangulation project was published in the May 2007 issue of the *National Bulletin on Domestic Violence Prevention*.

Each semester, WATCH participates in the initial training for new pediatric interns at Hennepin County Medical Center, providing them with an opportunity to learn about the justice system's response to child abuse and attend relevant court hearings. We hosted three

groups of four-five interns each this past year.

Since its release last January, WATCH has sold 153 copies of its revised and updated training manual, *Developing a Court Monitoring Program*. From tips for preparing volunteers for court and establishing criteria for data collection to conducting research projects and working with community partners, the manual walks users through the many aspects of a successful court monitoring program.

We have also revised and expanded our website and added features for purchasing the manual and other materials as well as registering for web-seminars on-line.

Last month, WATCH executive director Marna Anderson appeared on Meet Your Court, a local cable TV program, to discuss the issue of cameras in courtrooms. The Star Tribune also published an opinion piece she wrote on the topic last fall.

The fall 2007 issue of *Family Law Forum*, a publication of the Family Law section of the Minnesota Bar Association, addresses domestic violence and includes an article by WATCH entitled, "*Keeping safety front and center in order for protection hearings.*"

National Initiatives

Building on the training manual's success, WATCH initiated several other programs in 2007 to support the expansion of court monitoring around the country. The goal of all these initiatives is to assist court monitoring programs across the U.S. to be more effective in ensuring the safety of women and children and to build a national network for sharing information and collaborating among programs. Our national initiatives include:

•Court Monitoring Connection

The bi-monthly e-bulletin for court monitoring groups is distributed to over 400

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subscribers. It has covered topics such as developing a volunteer program and conducting effective research. In addition to getting important information into the hands of newly established programs, organizations are building relationships with one another as a result of reading program profiles included in the bulletins.

• *Quarterly web-seminars*

Web-seminars assist court monitoring and advocacy groups across the country to develop strategies for enhancing justice system accountability in their communities. Four seminars were held last year and five are scheduled for 2008. Thirty-two people from 16 states—the largest group to date—participated in the September web-seminar on working effectively with criminal justice system personnel. The Training page of our website includes a list of 2008 topics.

• *The National Association of Court Monitoring Programs*

Currently, 16 association members from ten states and the Virgin Islands compose the National Association of Court Monitoring Programs. The association offers a sliding scale membership fee based on the court monitoring program's budget and is an effective way to become connected with like-minded groups working toward the same goals.

WATCH provided intensive technical assistance to monitoring groups from three states in 2007. In April, WATCH staff traveled to Nevada to train local battered women's advocacy programs through the Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence. In November, WATCH sponsored two days of technical assistance for staff members from Unity House (New York) and S.A.F.E. Place (Michigan), who traveled to Minneapolis. They met with WATCH staff, observed court, and talked with members of the justice system. We shared materials and facilitated discussions on developing strategic goals, working with media and community

members, and maintaining program autonomy and independence.

Organization capacity

WATCH currently has six staff positions (5.1 FTE) and a 14-member board of directors. We have a comprehensive business plan and strategic plan; both include goals for evaluating WATCH programs and increasing organizational diversity. One aspect of the business plan deals specifically with marketing and outreach strategies for disseminating our training materials and providing technical assistance to interested groups around the country.

In October, several board and staff members attended the YWCA's It's Time to Talk luncheon on diversity. The board governance committee is focused on moving WATCH's diversity agenda forward, incorporating this topic into the annual retreat and holding board meeting discussions throughout the year.

In 2007, the board embarked on an ambitious plan to raise an additional \$50,000 each year for three years from individual donors. As of December 31, the campaign has resulted in \$35,100 in new contributions or pledges. Earned income has also increased this year, as a result of manual sales, national association memberships, and web-seminar fees.

From January 1-December 31, 2007, WATCH had the following in revenue and expenses.

Revenue	
Foundation grants	61%
Individual Gifts	35%
Earned Income	4%
Expenses	
Program	88%
Management/General	6.5%
Fundraising	5.5%

Volunteer notes

- ✓ The judge hearing felony arraignments seemed overly friendly with the defendants. At one point he told a defendant, "I'm taking a real chance with you, buddy." In two other cases, he asked defendants about the history of their names.
- ✓ When I first arrived in the courtroom, the clerk asked me which cases I was there for and if I was with WATCH. She updated me on the case status and told me when the hearing would begin. An attorney in another courtroom gave helpful information to a defendant's family. It's nice to be acknowledged and informed about what's happening.
- ✓ The deputies in felony arraignment court did an excellent job of keeping the courtroom quiet and respectful. They removed several individuals from the gallery who persisted in communicating with people in custody.
- ✓ The judge in domestic violence court didn't make any eye contact or even look at the defendants.
- ✓ Several times during the morning, the judge got down from the bench to speak to family members in the gallery between hearings. In one case, he arranged for an interpreter for a defendant's meeting with his probation officer. In another case, he encouraged a family to support a defendant in following the terms of his probation. He was sympathetic, kind, and supportive. His active involvement seems like it will help defendants and victims alike.
- ✓ The judge in the government center announced what was going to take place and asked everyone in the gallery if they were in the correct room and understood what was happening.
- ✓ At an appearance in the government center, I overheard an attorney say, "Just dismiss it [the case], save some time."

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National Push for Stalking Awareness

January is National Stalking Awareness Month, and victim advocates across the country used the designation to bring attention to this pervasive crime that affects nearly 1.4 million Americans a year.

Stalking—typically defined as a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear—is a criminal offense under the laws of all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the federal government. Although its prevalence is high, public awareness that stalking is a crime remains dangerously low. One in 12 women and one in 45 men will be stalked in their lifetime, for an average duration of almost two years. Seventy-six percent of female homicide victims were also stalked prior to their death, and more than half of these victims reported stalking to the police before being murdered by their stalkers.

“Stalking is often invisible to everyone except the victim,” said Mary Lou Leary, executive director of the National Center for Victims of Crime. “Our hope is that National Stalking Awareness Month will serve to bring stalking to the attention of policy makers, law enforcement officials, and the general public so that when stalking victims need help, we will all respond appropriately—doing everything we can to keep them safe and hold offenders accountable for their actions.”

National Stalking Awareness Month, intended to increase the public's awareness of stalking, was motivated by the death of Peggy Klinke, a stalking victim who was murdered by an ex-boyfriend after repeatedly seeking law enforcement intervention.

Local Organization Builds Awareness through Community Activities

Cornerstone, a domestic violence advocacy organization serving Hennepin County, received a two-year grant to develop a protocol for handling stalking cases within a coordinated community response. The team is developing a

flexible stalking response protocol that can be used by any agency in Minnesota. In addition, Cornerstone provides individual and group support to victims of stalking. This can include, but is not limited to, assisting with record-keeping, knowledge of the law, and safety planning.

Cornerstone's training will be available later this year to law enforcement, prosecution, advocates and other judicial stakeholders. Support groups are limited to Hennepin County residents, but the stalking response program will answer calls from victims of stalking or advocates from anywhere in the state.

For more information, please contact the Stalking Response Program at 612-646-6570.

Facts about Stalking in America

- 1,006,970 women and 370,990 men are stalked annually in the United States.
- 77 percent of female and 64 percent of male victims know their stalker.
- 87 percent of stalkers are men.
- 59 percent of female victims and 30 percent of male victims are stalked by an intimate partner.
- 81 percent of women stalked by a current or former intimate partner are also physically assaulted by that partner.
- 31 percent of women stalked by a current or former intimate partner are also sexually assaulted by that partner.
- 73 percent of intimate partner stalkers verbally threatened the victims with physical violence, and almost 46 percent of victims experienced one or more violent incidents by the stalker.
- The average duration of stalking is 1.8 years. When stalking involves intimate partners, the average duration of stalking increases to 2.2 years.
- 61 percent of stalkers made unwanted phone calls; 33 percent sent or left unwanted letters or items; 29 percent vandalized property; and 9 percent killed or threatened to kill a family pet.

Thank you **continued from page 8**

Winnidell Wilson

Mike and Penny Winton

Steve and Kathy Wishart

Sandy and Rich Worthing

Margaret and Angus Wurtele

Julie and Charlie Zelle

*(William deceased January 2, 2008)

We make every effort to insure the accuracy of our records. If there is a mistake in your listing, please let us know so we may correct it. All your gifts are very much appreciated and we thank you for your understanding.

Volunteer notes continued from page 10

✓ While judges are in chambers, some attorneys waiting in court rooms between hearings can be overheard using profanity. Frequently other people are in the gallery besides me when this happens. I know it's not “official” behavior, but it makes me uncomfortable.

✓ I was shocked at the change in the judge's demeanor in OFP court this morning. During the first hearing, where both parties spoke English, she was thorough in explaining the procedures and the options. In the second hearing, involving a Hmong interpreter, her demeanor shifted dramatically. She showed a great deal of impatience, and it came out in her tone of voice, brusqueness answering parties' questions, and hurrying them out at the end of the hearing.

LOW COST OFFICE SPACE NEEDED

For more than a decade, WATCH has received office space in the Northstar East Building at a greatly reduced rate. But, it looks like those days may be coming to an end as new owners prepare to renovate the building. We are looking for approximately 2,500 square feet in downtown Minneapolis (preferably skyway connected). If you know anyone who may have space to rent to us, please contact Marna at manderson@watchmn.org. Thank you!

WATCH

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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

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Anita Gopaldaswamy, Volunteer Coordinator
Donna McNamara, Development & Communications Director
Nashad Muse, Administrative Assistant
Heather Wolfgram, Court Monitoring Coordinator

Founder: Susan Lenfestey

Board Chair: Sara Mushlitz

Board of Directors: Beverly Balos, Ron Beining, Lisa Denzer, Liliana Espondaburu, Jacquelyn Hauser, Amy Walsh Kern, Susan Lenfestey, Anita Patel, Sarah Perron, Joan C. Peterson, Peggy Pluimer, Romaine Scharlemann, Claudia Velasco

2007 Volunteers

WATCH would like to thank each and every volunteer for contributing time and energy to the organization. We couldn't do this work without you!

Cassandra Abel
Samarra Abubouran
Alees Alles
Dena Andrew-Jaja
Michael Betz
Sarah Bird
Breeana Blalock
Alyssa Bonner
Elizabeth Borer
Wendy Brown
Dee Broxey
Hal Broxey
Dawn Bruggeman
Joseph Buechler
James Callerstrom
Kelly Carolan
Britany Christenson
Desiree Clater
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Janet Conn
Jennifer Cornell
Jaclyn Cruz
Anna Cutler
Laura Danielson
Christina Davenport
Toni Decker

Kelsey Detle
Jamie Eberle
Mary Eichten
Sheyda Esnaashari
Margaret Evavold
Lillian Ewing
Riham Feshir
Jacob Fischer
Erin Gregory
Erica Hatfield
Antonia Hauser
Ayah Helmy
Joanne Henderson
Anne Herreid
Christine Hinrichs
Holai Holbrook
Tara James
Erbayne Jarvis
Lolaunda Jefferson
Jennifer Johnson
Gary Joselyn
Holly Kellar
Katherine Kelly
Abigail Koppien
Megan Kosse
Chongleng Ku
Mallory Kurkoski

Paul Kwako
Rachel Lance
Linda Larson
Mary Lay Schuster
Jessica Linn
Timothy Louris
Moirra Lynch
Susan Maki
Sarah Mandile
Anisha Mangalick
Kelly McGee
Frank McQuillan
Daniel Morris
Jessica Ofstedahl
Carrie Olson
Gabrielle Orfield
Justin Paul
Marit Peterson
Kathy Phifer
Desiree Price
Anushka Ranasinghe
Elizabeth Riggs
Amanda Roberts
Tamicka Robinson
Briana Rodell
Ryan Rodgers
Sara Rogers

Tanya Rosin
Katrina Roste
Katrina Rowell
Deborah Royal
Lindsey Saunders
Roberta Saunders
Alexandra Savela
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