

Speaker Resumes
NAPCO Webinar • Thursday, April 3, 2025; 3:00 PM (EDT)
Leading Major Change in Trial Court

Hon. John J. Russo

... is the immediate Past Administrative and Presiding Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Ohio in Cuyahoga County (Greater Cleveland). Unanimously elected by his colleagues to lead the Court from 2014-2019, he was responsible for coordinating the development of Court policies and overseeing the administration of the General Division, the highest-level trial court in the state.

Currently, Judge Russo manages his own criminal and civil dockets as a trial judge. He oversaw the Veteran Treatment Court/Specialty Docket from 2018-2022. In addition, he has chaired or participated in numerous justice system boards and committees since beginning his judicial career in 2005 on the Common Pleas Court. Some include: Chair-Elect and Co-Chair of the Court Administration Committee of the Ohio Judicial Conference; President of the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association; Cleveland Marshall Law Alumni Association where in 2018 he was inducted into the CM/Law Hall of Fame and in 2019 was CMLAA Alumni of the year; Member of the Judiciary's Public Health, Death Penalty and Bail / Bond Reform Task Forces (all appointed by the Ohio Chief Justice); Past President and Man of The Year recipient of the Legal Eagles St. Edward High School.

He served as president of the National Association for Presiding Judges and Court Executive Officers (NAPCO), a national organization of court chief judges and court executives, from 2015-2016. In 2019, he was elected to, and currently serves as, NAPCO's Chair of the Board of Directors. In addition, he has taught at numerous court conclaves, judges' conferences, community programs, and bar association CLE programs.

Judge Russo is a member of the Ohio State Bar Association, Cuyahoga Metropolitan Bar Association, Westshore Bar Association, and Cleveland Marshall Law Alumni Association. Prior to the bench, Judge Russo was a civil and criminal litigator in private practice. After earning a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, he received his Juris Doctor degree at Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, where he currently serves as an Adjunct Professor.

David Yamasaki

... is the Court Executive Officer and Clerk of Court for the Superior Court of California, County of Orange (Greater Santa Ana), a position he has held since December 2016. It is a unified trial court, ranking as the fifth largest in the nation with 140 judicial officers, 8 locations, 1500 employees and 500,000 annual case filings. He has over 34 years of experience in the California Judicial Branch, including Chief Executive Officer (2008-2016) in Santa Clara County Superior

Court; Assistant Executive Officer (1998-2008), Director of Criminal Operations (1993-1998), and Coordinator of Criminal Operations (1992-1998) in San Diego County Superior Court; Administrative Operations Manager (1988-1992) in North County Municipal Court in Vista CA; Senior Administrative Assistant (1987-1988), Legal Research Assistant (1986-1987) in Los Angeles Municipal Court; and Deputy Clerk II (1985-1986) in San Diego Municipal Court.

During his various positions within the California court system, Mr. Yamasaki has served on numerous committees, commissions, and task forces with the Judicial Council, California's judicial system governing board, and as a member of the Council itself. Additionally, he also serves on the Executive Committee of the National Association of Presiding Judges and Court Executive Officers (NAPCO).

Mr. Yamasaki has a B.S. degree in Criminal Justice Administration from San Diego State University, and M.A. Degree in Public Administration with an emphasis in Judicial Administration from the University of Southern California.

Raymond L. Billotte

... is the Administrator for the Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County, serving as the senior executive officer for the nation's fourth largest trial court. Previously, he served as the District Court Administrator in the 5th Judicial District of Pennsylvania (Greater Pittsburgh) from 1996-2012 and the 46th Judicial District of Pennsylvania (Clearfield) from 1985-1992.

Mr. Billotte holds a master's degree of Public Management from Carnegie-Mellon University and is a 1991 Graduate Fellow of the Institute for Court Management's (ICM) Court Executive Development Program. During his tenure with the courts, he has led numerous successful court improvement projects, including caseload management revisions, jury reform, strategic planning, jail population reduction strategies, and the use of evidence-based practices in both pre-trial and post-adjudicative phases of the criminal justice system. Additionally, he has served as a consultant with USAID addressing criminal justice reforms in the Mexican states of Oaxaca and Chihuahua and has served on numerous state and national court management committees addressing the use of technology in the courts, preservation and transcription of court records, professional development of court managers, and juror diversity.

Mr. Billotte has served as Vice President of the National Association for Presiding Judges and Chief Executive Officers (NAPCO) twice, once in 2016 when the Annual Conference and Academy Day was held in Cleveland, Ohio, as well as the following year (2017) when the Arizona Judicial Branch in Maricopa hosted the conference in Scottsdale, Arizona. He also serves as NAPCO's Chief Financial Officer.

Gordon Griller

... is the former Executive Director of the National Association for Presiding Judges and Court Executive Officers (NAPCO). He served pro bono in that role for eight years 2016-23. From

June 2006 – February 2024, he worked as a Principal Court Management Consultant with the National Center for State Courts. His consulting engagements were wide-ranging, including caseflow management, court operations improvement, reengineering, court facility studies, strategic planning, efficiency analyses, systems and procedures, organizational development, and leadership development programs for presiding judges, chief administrative officers, and program professionals in general, limited, and specialized courts.

Prior to his service with the Center, Mr. Griller held numerous private and public positions dedicated to trial court improvement and reform, including Vice President of Justice Practices for the State and Local Solutions Group at Affiliated Computer Systems (ACS), a division of the Xerox Corporation; the first Administrator of Trial Courts for the Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County (Greater Phoenix); Court Administrator for the Superior Court in Maricopa County; the first Judicial District Administrator of the Second Judicial District of Minnesota in Ramsey County (Greater St. Paul); and Court Administrator of the Municipal Court of Hennepin County, Minnesota (Greater Minneapolis) prior to the unification of Minnesota's state and local trial courts. He began his career in trial courts in 1972.

In his 50+ years working with state and local trial courts, Mr. Griller has served as President of the National Association of Trial Court Administrators where he co-chaired a Special Merger Commission in the 1980s that created the National Association for Court Management (NACM), the largest professional association in the world dedicated to the improvement of trial court administration. He is a recipient of the National Center's *Warren E. Burger Award* for outstanding contributions to court administration, the National Conference of Metropolitan Courts' *Tom C. Clark Award*, NACM's *Award of Merit*, the Institute for Court Management's *Star Award*, the Justice Management Institute's *Ernest C. Friesen Award* for vision, leadership, and sustained commitment to excellence in the administration of justice, and in 2023 he received the inaugural *Gordon (Gordy) Griller Award for Excellence in Court Leadership* which is presented annually by NAPCO to a person or persons who demonstrate leadership, innovation and a life-long commitment to access to justice for all.

Gordy holds a B.A. Degree in Political Science from the University of Minnesota, and a M.A. Degree in Public Administration from the Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota (Minneapolis).