

General Sessions Court, Division VIII (8)

Metropolitan Nashville & Davidson County

Judge Rachel L. Bell

August 27, 2012 - August 27, 2019
7-Year Report

"Ringing the BELL for Justice **1** Case at a Time"

160,867
Criminal Cases



Misdemeanor | Felony

22,890
Civil Cases



Eviction | Debt Collection
Personal Injury

1,231
Mental Health
Committal Hearings



MTMHI | Vanderbilt
Parthenon | Skyline

8,045 Traffic Cases

Tickets | Citations



General Sessions Music City Community Court

Division VIII (8)

Est. 2012 - 1st in the State - Nashville, Davidson Co., TN

"Justice does **NOT** stop at the courthouse steps."™



Saturday Community Service Return Docket

Since 2013, **1,098 participants**
have served **5,634 hours** to save
tax payers **\$120,321.74**



REACH

Summer Literacy Program

For MNPS Rising 1st - 4th Graders

75

Participants



Expungement Clinic & Resource Fairs

Since 2014, we have hosted **22
clinics**,
serving **1,791** participants.

FUTURE

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

MNPS (High School), College, Law
School, & Post-Graduate Students

71

Interns



Indigency Motion Docket

Since 2015, we have reviewed
48,809 cases to help **8,599**
participants get their court costs,
fines, and fees waived so that they can
request expungement, restore voting rights,
reinstate their driver's license, and gain
access to housing and jobs.

C.A.R.E.

Creating Avenues for
Restoration & Empowerment
Diversionary Court for Ages 18-30

1st

of its kind in
the state.





**The General Sessions Music City Community Court, Division VIII (8) (GSMCCC)
was founded by Judge Rachel L. Bell in 2012.**

Mission- To create initiatives focused on preventative, restorative and diversionary justice centered around the concept that, *"Justice does NOT stop at the courthouse steps!!"*™

Vision- Charged to do all it can to help break the playground to prison pipeline; to restore and rehabilitate lives by using its power and resources to move the needle to help marginalized people.

- TIMELINE of initiatives created and number of Participants since the inception of GSMCCC -

2012 – FUTURE Internship program was created for MNPS students during their school breaks and Judicial Clerkships for College and Law School Students. **Since 2012, we have worked with 71 students.** In this same year the **"Control the Controllable"**® journal writing program was established for offenders on probation.

2013 – Judge Bell partnered with **TDOT to Adopt-A-Highway** in Bordeaux-North Nashville to create the Saturday Community Service Return Docket to provide access to justice so that after offenders have completed the work, they are given credit immediately and do not have to come back to court to show proof of compliance with an agreed order or guilty under-advisement plea. **Since 2013, we have worked with 1,098 participants, served 5,634 hours, and saved tax payers \$120,321.74 dedicated to public service.**

2014 – The Expungement Clinic, Indigency Docket & Resource Fair was created in partnership with Howard Gentry and the Criminal Court Clerk's Office, and moves around Davidson County every 4-6 weeks. This docket assists offenders with the ability to proceed with filing petitions to clear their criminal record for cases that are eligible for expungement. **Since 2014, we have hosted 22 clinics serving 1,791 participants and averaged 19-20 vendors providing services and resources to the community. Due to these continued efforts, the Criminal Court Clerk's office has seen a significant increase in their yearly expungement requests, from 13,984 expungements in 2011 to 34,041 expungements in 2018, and 20,759 expungements as of August 2019, which is way ahead of last year's total.**

2015 – Judge Bell took over the **General Sessions Pro Se Indigency Docket**, and the dockets are scheduled on Wednesday at 1:30 p.m. every 2 weeks during the regularly scheduled dockets and on Saturdays at 10:30 a.m. during our Expungement Clinics. **Since 2015, we have worked with 8,599 participants, reviewed 48,809 cases and waived over \$2,293,115.68 in court costs, fines, and fees** for those meeting the United States Department of Health & Human Services Federal Poverty Guidelines that are utilized to determine Public Defender eligibility. **This allows individuals the opportunity to proceed with record expungement requests, to reinstate driver's licenses, and gain access to housing and jobs.**

2016 – Judge Bell partnered with the Bordeaux-North Nashville Chamber of Commerce and the Ring the BELL Foundation to create **R.E.A.C.H. (Reaching Every Aspiring Child's Horizon)**, a 6-week summer literacy program offered to MNPS rising 1st – 4th graders. **Since 2016, over 75 students have participated.** Also in 2016, Judge Bell was trained and certified to teach Alive at 25, a National Safety Council Defensive Driver Class for those aged 15-25. **Since, 2016, Judge Bell has given 25 MNPS students a certificate of graduation.**

2017 – Community Forums were created to share knowledge and insight on steps taken in Davidson County working towards Criminal Justice Reform. This is an on-going effort.

2018 – The GSMCCC was one of 5 courts in the United States that received \$200,000.00 from the Department of Justice in partnership with the Tennessee Supreme Court Access to Justice Commission to work with the Bureau of Justice Assistance and receive Technical Assistance from the Center for Court Innovation to create the **C.A.R.E. (Creating Avenues for Restoration & Empowerment) Diversionary Court for offenders/participants aged 18-30.**

2019 – GSMCCC created a partnership with Steering Clear for the Saturday Community Service Return Docket. **Forty-six (46) individuals have participated YTD.** This partnership will work together on a quarterly basis. **The C.A.R.E Diversionary Court will launch this fall in Zip Code 37208 in Bordeaux-North Nashville to assist in reducing the rate of incarceration because Davidson County has the #1 highest rate in the United States of America.**

PREVENTATIVE-RESTORATIVE-DIVERSIONARY JUSTICE



"R.E.A.C.H.ing to the FUTURE because we C.A.R.E."

STATS – 2017 (Jan-Dec) 2,305 Participants
Expungement Clinic Participants – 391
Pro Se Indigency Docket Participants/**Cases** – 1,715/**8,500**
CSW Participants/Hours – 99/796
CSW – Money (\$) Saved to Taxpayers – \$17,496.00

STATS – 2018 (Jan-Dec) 2,993 Participants
Expungement Clinic Participants – 373
Pro Se Indigency Docket Participants/**Cases** – 2,485/**17,259**
CSW Participants/Hours – 135/675
CSW – Money (\$) Saved to Taxpayers – \$32,798.33

STATS – 2019 (Jan-Dec) 2,548 Participants
Expungement Clinic Participants – 472
Pro Se Indigency Docket Participants/**Cases** – 1,950/**14,930**
CSW Participants/Hours – 126/504
CSW – Money (\$) Saved to Taxpayers – \$11,425.68

-GSMCC DIVISION VIII (8) TEAM-

Judge Rachel L. Bell, **Division VIII (8), Presiding**
Christa Abernathy, **Executive Administrative Assistant**
Tamara Givens, **Judicial Court Officer/Outreach Coordinator**
Andrew Dick, **Judicial Court Officer/Data Analyst**
Maryam Abdallah, **Social Work Coordinator/Case Manager**
Jackie London & Laurel Howell, **Probation/Case Managers**
Carlos DeLeon, **Criminal Court Clerk, Deputy**
Monica Johnson, **Courtroom Security**
Keeda Haynes & Mario Knox, **Assistant Public Defenders**
David Jones & Emily Todoran, **Assistant District Attorneys**