

A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE EDITORS

Welcome to Volume I, Number 2 of the *Journal of Court Innovation*. This is our first special issue. Our topic is one of critical importance to courts: juries. We dedicate this issue to New York State Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye, a national leader in the effort to improve the jury process. We also recognize the American Bar Association's leadership in strengthening the jury system by timing our publication date to coincide with the ABA's 2008 National Symposium on the American Jury System in New York.

Chief Judge Kaye's article, "*Why Juries? Looking Back, Looking Ahead,*" provides an introduction to our Jury Issue. Tom Munsterman explains, in an interview, how jury improvements have made juries more representative and given jurors new tools to help them make informed decisions. Gregory Mize and Paula Hannaford-Agor of the National Center for State Courts provide an overview of the *State-of-the-States-Survey*, the first-ever effort to review the status of the jury across the nation—from jury composition, to conduct of voir dire, to modern trial practices for jurors such as note-taking and juror questions during trial. Peter Tiersma and Mathew Curtis tackle the thorny question of whether revised jury instructions actually improve jurors' comprehension of legal rules. Moving from jury instructions into the jury room, Ryan Ferch presents a novel argument for an improvement aimed at jurors' comprehension—permitting demonstrative evidence to be sent to the jury room during deliberations.

As part of our ongoing commitment to incorporating theory and practice, we include three practice pieces. Ellen Brickman and her colleagues address the potentially prejudicial impact of Internet use by jurors during voir dire and trial. New Mexico Chief Justice Edward L. Chavez describes New Mexico's unique experience providing interpreters for non-English speaking jurors. New York City Criminal Court Judge Anthony J. Ferrara describes his experiences allowing jurors to submit written questions for witnesses. In addition, Gary R. Giewat offers his review of the book *Scientific Jury Selection*.

Also included in this issue is a piece that is not related to juries: a roundtable discussion on improving court responses to domestic violence.

As always, we welcome your feedback.

Greg Berman

Robert G.M. Keating

Michelle S. Simon