

Center for Legal and Court Technology Media Center

Courtroom 21 Conducts International Conference on the Legal and Policy Implications of Courtroom Technology

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The Courtroom 21 Project, with sponsorship from the William & Mary Institute of Bill of Rights Law and the American Bar Association's Judicial Administration, Federal Litigation, and Criminal Justice Divisions, and with the support of the Federal Judicial Center, will conduct the Courtroom 21 International Conference on the Legal and Policy Implications of Courtroom Technology at William & Mary Law School's McGlothlin Courtroom on February 13-14, 2004.

The increasing use of courtroom technology is changing the nature of trials. Although there is substantial agreement that courtroom technology increases the efficiency and likely factfinder understanding of the evidence, the other consequences of our new technologies are far less clear. We believe that there is now sufficient experience to justify a discussion of where we are and where we are going. The International Conference will address the fundamental fairness of the use of courtroom technology. Although concentrating mainly on the United States, distinguished presenters will also address Australian, British, and European Union perspectives. The conference will begin with brief reports from around the world and then probe the legal and policy implications of what is happening today and likely to occur tomorrow. Papers presented at the Conference will be published in William & Mary's Bill of Rights Journal.

William & Mary Law School's Institute of Bill of Rights Law (IBRL) was created to contribute to the ongoing national dialogue about issues relating to the United States Constitution and our Bill of Rights. One of the guiding philosophies of the Institute is the conviction that our collective understanding of constitutional issues is enhanced significantly when experts from diverse disciplines - lawyers, journalists, historians, political scientists, economists, sociologists, and politicians - are brought together for serious discussion and debate. Following this interdisciplinary approach, the Institute provides a forum for airing and debating matters of law and policy as a means of increasing our understanding of important constitutional issues.

The world-renowned Courtroom 21 Project, a joint initiative of the William and Mary Law School and the National Center for State Courts, is an ongoing international demonstration and experimental effort which seeks to determine how technology can best improve all components of the legal system. The Project works to improve the world's legal systems through the use of appropriate technology. It is the center of the Courtroom 21 Court Affiliates (United States and foreign courts interested in the efficient use of courtroom technology); it is the home of the Courtroom Information Project, a web-based visual database of the nation's courtrooms; and sponsor (with the assistance of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts) of the annual Courtroom 21 Conference on the Privacy Implications of Electronically Accessible Court Records. Most recently, the Project has made available a panel of experts to assist the courts as special masters for pretrial discovery disputes involving computer created or stored documents. It was a 1997 recipient of a Foundation for Improvement of Justice Award for its efforts to improve the administration of justice through technology. The Project's McGlothlin Courtroom is the world's most technologically advanced trial and appellate courtroom. For

more information on the Project, visit www.legaltechcenter.net.

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