

Center for Legal and Court Technology Media Center

Courtroom 21 Appoints Veteran Litigation, Courtroom Technology Educator

Former Director of Litigation Training for the Texas Office of the Attorney General to Join Staff

Williamsburg, VA, September 11, 2003

Fred Lederer, Chancellor Professor and Director of the Courtroom 21 Project, today announced the appointment of Mollie C. Nichols, J.D., L.L.M. as Associate Director for Research and Professional Education. The appointment marks a milestone for the Project, which has spearheaded courtroom technology research and implementation for more than a decade.

“Mollie adds an entirely new element to our team,” states Lederer. “She brings the experience of a veteran practitioner who is renowned for her expertise in the application of the most innovative courtroom technologies. We are privileged to have her with us.”

Nichols, formerly the Director of Litigation Training for the Office of the Attorney General, State of Texas, brings nearly two decades of experience in both civil and criminal litigation working for the federal and state government and in private practice. As an Assistant United States Attorney for the Department of Justice, Nichols was responsible for one of the early cases dealing with electronic evidence and alleged violations of the Electronic Communication Privacy Act of 1986, including the Federal Wiretap Act and the Stored Communications Act, a landmark case where computers which contained unopened email were seized by the Secret Service. She also ran the Civil and Appellate Divisions of the Department of Justice's Attorney General's Advocacy Institute, the trial training program for Assistant United States Attorneys nationwide.

Nichols has gained national acclaim within the courtroom technology industry through her nationwide efforts training litigators, publishing articles, and speaking on the use of technology in the courtroom and electronic evidence issues. She recently received her Masters degree in International Law and is also Board Certified in Personal Injury Trial Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization.

“The proliferation of technology in our every day lives has legal ramifications in and out of the courtroom beyond the practical application of these new and innovative tools,” Nichols said. “It changes the way we think about evidence, privacy, and due process, not to mention aspects of international legal considerations. There is no better place to be than on the cutting-edge of issues which may impact the legal systems of diverse nations in years to come.”

Nichols will be responsible for designing and managing a professional education program through hands-on programs in Williamsburg, as well as customized programs for bar associations and law firms to be held anywhere in the nation or abroad, utilizing most presentation software and equipment currently available in today's market.

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. 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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