

Judge Jodi Dennis Responds to Courthouse Shootings

Every day since “The Atlanta Incident” the issue of safety in and around the Courthouse has been the topic of conversation. In order to distance ourselves from the reality of a devastating rampage, we sanitize it by using the word ‘incident’. It is done as an attempt to remove fear and offer a sense, however false, of safety in the work place.



Judges have all talked about what horrible things could happen in Court with a disgruntled defendant.

We can all tell a story similar to “well, one day in court this guy showed up madder than a wet hen”

Luckily those stories did not end in paralyzing fear and tragic death. Unfortunately, the people at the

Fulton County Courthouse in Atlanta, GA have been stripped of any sense of security. Many remain in shock and continue to search for the whys and why nots. Others struggle with severe guilt issues. Help from NOVA was requested and immediately provided. After hearing people talk about how much they were helped by the crisis intervention, the Judges asked NOVA if they could provide a Judge to help them.

I am serving as a Circuit Judge in Jefferson and Lincoln Counties in Arkansas. NOVA sent me to Atlanta for two days for a follow up crisis intervention with the Judiciary who serve as District Judges as did Judge Barnes. Texas Court of Appeals Chief Justice and NOVA Board Member Richard Barajas was deployed as well.

Although only a limited number of the Judges ended up talking with us, I

believe the ones who did participate took the opportunity to begin their healing process. I had the privilege of meeting members of Judge Barnes’ staff who were held hostage. The trauma they experienced changed their lives forever. I was glad to see that out of such devastation, hope remains.

Submitted by Judge Jodi Dennis

SEACRT

NOVA Basic CRT - 2004

“AR-CRT if fortunate to have the only NOVA trained judge in the United States. Judge Dennis served our team well and brought us favorable national attention. She is a perfect example of the quality of our membership.”

**Andy Altom, Vice Chair
AR-CRT Board of Directors**

AR-CRT Responds to Wright, WY Tornadoes

Gray LeMaster and Jack Bell responded to Wright, WY at the invitation of school counselor Jean Kingan. The F-2 tornado tore through the town on August 12 and damaged 90% of the homes and buildings. Two people were killed and 13 others were injured. This close knit town of 1500 came together in the clean-up efforts, however, the strain was overwhelming to both victims and caregivers.

Gray and Jack provided “Y’all Comes”

to local caregiver trainings and also participated in walk-about. Jack was able to persuade a man to leave his severely damaged home. City officials praised Jack’s handling of this challenging situation. The traumatized man had been unresponsive to previous efforts made by others within the community. AR-CRT was called on due to our tornado response experience here in Arkansas. Gray and Jack provided the needed interven-

tions to move the community forward.

Boy, thanks is so weak. I am like MAJORLY grateful for everyone’s help. I thought the training and the meetings were excellent, especially for me. Gray and Jack are wonderful and it felt like family leaving on Thursday night.

**Jean Kingan, School Counselor
Wright, WY**