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Delaware County “Good Deeds” Team Reaches Elected Officials in all 88 Counties

DELAWARE, Ohio — With an eye-catching tagline like “Skip Probate >> Proceed Straight to Your Intended Beneficiary,” three local officials have garnered significant interest from residents in Delaware County for a program they implemented earlier this year. Not surprisingly, their approach has caught the eye of elected officials statewide who want to learn how they do it.

When Delaware County Clerk of Courts Natalie Fravel, Court of Common Pleas Probate Judge David Hejmanowski and County Recorder Melissa Jordan began planning their “Good Deeds” program earlier this year, they had no idea just how popular the program would become: Since early this year, the team has held nearly half a dozen public events, and attendance at each event grows more than the last. Most recently on Nov. 25, the team presented to a total audience of more than 450 residents over two sessions at Big Walnut High School.

The informational presentation highlights how the probate court process works as it relates to Real Property records and all titled vehicles. It also connects residents with local attorneys who can assist them in re-writing a Real Property deed for a nominal flat fee.

In October, the Delaware County Officials presented to elected officials from over a dozen other Ohio counties, as officials from as far away as Carroll County traveled for a one-hour session on a Monday night in Delaware to learn how to implement “Good Deeds” in their home counties. The Delaware Good Deeds team was then asked to present at the Winter Conference of the Ohio Clerk of Courts Association, and all 88 counties, in early December.

For the “how-to” events, Recorder Jordan distributes an extensive outline she created on how to proceed with “Good Deeds” step-by-step for interested counties. “It’s designed to be a workable template or a launching point — the point is, they won’t need to re-invent the wheel in order to get started unless they want to,” Jordan said.

“We want our colleagues to know we’re available for any questions they have about starting Good Deeds in their own counties,” Clerk of Courts Natalie Fravel said, “and we hope to provide them with more insight into how we work together to make that happen at our state-wide ‘how-to’ session on Dec. 4.”

Judge David Hejmanowski added, “If we can simply encourage people to do simple, relatively inexpensive planning during their lifetime, then they will make the task supremely easier for their loved ones after they’re gone.”

Recorder Jordan concluded, “Good Deeds is good government. It is walking beside our residents and helping them start one of the most uncomfortable, but necessary, discussions they’ll ever have. We want to be a resource for them, and for our colleagues who are interested in starting a similar program.”

The Good Deeds team is currently planning sessions for early next year. For more information, contact Recorder Melissa Jordan at mjordan@co.delaware.oh.us.

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