



**Judicial Branch of Arizona
in Maricopa County**

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Visiting Japanese Judge Genki Hayami Shares Early Impressions
Judge Cites Key Differences Between the American and Japanese Judicial Systems

PHOENIX (October 7, 2022) – Japanese Judge Genki Hayami arrived in Arizona in July to learn more about the American legal system and share his experiences when he returns home.

As part of the Overseas Training and Research Program sponsored by the Supreme Court of Japan, Judge Hayami will be in Arizona for a full year, taking classes at Arizona State University's Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law and observing proceedings and interviewing judges at the Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County.

"I really appreciate the warm welcome I have received at this Court. I find it valuable to be able to compare the Japanese judicial system to that of the U.S. through this trip," Judge Hayami said. "In my opinion, one of the major differences between the two judicial systems is the jury system. I know this will come as surprise to all of you, we don't have a jury system in civil cases. In criminal cases, we set up a Japanese jury system about 10 years ago referred to as *Saiban-in*. This practice is quite different from your jury system and used for certain types of serious criminal cases. Under the *Saiban-in* system, six jury members and three judges collaborate to not only serve in a fact-finding role, but also determine sentence."

After Judge Hayami completes his law classes in the Fall, he will focus most of his attention on Superior Court exploring his topic of interest for a research paper that will be presented to the Supreme Court of Japan upon his return. Judge Hayami's is interested in learning more about Maricopa County's e-filing system, and civil and criminal law.

"I hope to observe your practices and learn from this precious experience with the goal of taking ideas back to Japan for possible implementation," Judge Hayami said.

The Overseas Training and Research Program is competitive, and many judges apply to the program each year. Judges who are selected are required to have expertise and ability relating to judicial practice as well as general education. Part of the program is designed to help young judges broaden their perspectives and deepen their insight. In Japan, judges are typically appointed after passing the bar and two years of judicial training. Many judges are 25 years old when appointed.

“Our court has been hosting judges from Japan for about 30 years. I have been the liaison of the program for the last 10,” said Christopher Bleuenstein, Ph.D., Department Administrator of Court Reporting & Court Interpreter and Translation Services. “It is fulfilling to me to be able to coordinate their learning of our judicial system, and I also find it fascinating to learn about the judicial system and culture of Japan.”

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The Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County is comprised of Superior Court, Adult Probation and Juvenile Probation, which includes juvenile detention. The Judicial Branch in Maricopa County is the fourth largest trial court system in the nation and, along with its 3,000 employees, is dedicated to providing a safe, fair and impartial forum for resolving disputes, enhancing access to services, and providing innovative, evidence-based practices that improve the safety of the community and ensure the public’s trust and confidence in the Judicial Branch. For more information, visit www.superiorcourt.maricopa.gov.