

Office of the Kane County State's Attorney



JOSEPH H. McMAHON
State's Attorney

Kane County Judicial Center
37W777 Route 38 Suite 300
St. Charles, Illinois 60175

General Offices: (630) 232-3500
Contact:
Christopher Nelson (630) 232-3500

PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF THE INNOCENT AND THE ACCUSED PROSECUTORS FROM NINE STATES GATHER TO STUDY AND SHARE BEST PRACTICES

October 15, 2014

Prosecutors take an oath of office to protect the rights of the innocent and of the accused. This year, prosecutors from across Illinois have been meeting to discuss the best practices within the criminal justice system.

Last week, prosecutors from Illinois, Arizona, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, South Dakota and Wisconsin joined in on the discussion at the Circuit Attorney's Office in St. Louis for a regional "Best Practices for Justice" Summit.

In 2014, Illinois began working to form a dedicated Best Practices Committee for prosecutors to study, recommend and work to implement best practices to keep our communities safe. The committee, established by the Illinois State's Attorney's Association, has received strong statewide support.

"As prosecutors, we commit ourselves to determining how the criminal justice system can best uphold the rights of all citizens," said Kane County State's Attorney Joe McMahon, who attended the summit and who serves as the Illinois Director of the National District Attorney's Association. "That is the primary mission as our committee dives headfirst into this important work."

The Best Practices for Justice Summit allowed Illinois prosecutors to confer with others from around the region who also care deeply about justice and desire to find ways to improve the criminal justice system. Illinois is among many states that are in the process of creating or establishing a Best Practices Committee.

The summit focused on exploring different elements of the criminal justice system to ensure prosecutors are best equipped to fulfill their legal and ethical obligations. Among the topics discussed were the gathering of forensic and digital evidence, overall ethics and crime prevention. The forum also addressed issues of community, prosecutor and police relations.

"We were pleased to share our knowledge and experiences," McMahon said. "We also heard promising ideas from the other jurisdictions that all prosecutors will continue to explore as we work to seek justice, prevent crime and ensure the safety

of all. One thing remained clear, however. And that is that the pursuit of justice is – and always will be – a constant endeavor that requires our utmost attention.”

The St. Louis regional summit was the second in a series of four to be held throughout the country. The initiative is funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance within the U.S. Department of Justice. Kristine Hamann, Visiting Fellow at the Bureau of Justice Assistance, is leading the initiative. Hamann is a former Assistant District Attorney in Manhattan, and was instrumental in forming the best practices committee in New York State.