



Wisconsin State Public Defender

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Wisconsin SPD Conducting Trial Skills Training with Country of Georgia

MADISON, Wis. - Starting this week and running for six weeks, staff from the Wisconsin State Public Defender's Office (SPD) will be providing trial skills training for criminal defense attorneys in the Country of Georgia. Working with the United States Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), Embassy Tbilisi, the Georgian Bar Association, and the Georgian Legal Aid Service, the goal of the training is to enhance skills of criminal defense attorneys in Georgia.

"We are proud to again work with the State Department, this time to provide training for our colleagues in Georgia. Following on our previous training in Armenia, the SPD is honored to work with INL and the Georgians to enhance trust in the judicial system by supporting the rule of law and the adversarial principles in the court system," said State Public Defender Kelli Thompson.

Georgia expanded access to the right to trial by jury in 2017, and building skills to advocate for clients is a new facet of many criminal cases in Georgia. Training by the SPD will focus on the theory of defense, cross examination, and jury selection. Training will be provided by SPD Training Director Gina Pruski and SPD Attorneys Guy Cardamone, Eric Heywood, Richard Jones, and Ashley Morse.

"These trainers have extensive courtroom experience as well as a long track record of providing trial skills training in Wisconsin and beyond. Being able to provide trial skills training for defense attorneys raises the standard for due process across the globe and increases public trust in the judicial process," said SPD Training Director Gina Pruski.

More than 20 Georgian attorneys will participate in the six week training provided by videoconference. Thanks to the logistical and financial support of the State Department, this training is being provided at no cost to Wisconsin taxpayers and on top of the caseload handled by the SPD attorneys involved.

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