



Grand Jurors' Journal

cgja.org

Volume 22, No. 2

April 2021

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James (Jim) F. Ragan

September 21, 1938 - March 1, 2021

by Jerry Lewi Chair, Public Relations Committee

Recently elected President, Jim Ragan, died on March 1. He had just been elected in October 2020. The December *Journal* carried his "inaugural" address (more on that later) and the February *Journal* provided his bio with emphasis on his many and wide-ranging CGJA accomplishments.

In November, Jim notified us that he had just had a stroke. He was quite lucid. Over the next months he gained strength and attended a few Zoom meetings of the board and the committees he still chaired (Public Relations and Membership and Chapter Relations). Unfortunately, recovery from the stroke was not enough to overcome his other underlying health conditions.



Jim with daughters Vanessa Ragan (left) and Colleen Erks (right)

Jim's remarks at the Annual Membership meeting left us a legacy. He asked for ideas and help to improve our ability to educate all Californians (at all educational levels) about the importance of the grand jury system and stressed outreach at both the local and state-wide levels. He asked for journal articles promoting activities beneficial to the system. He reported on our current effort to update our primer, *The California Grand Jury System*. Jim initiated that effort and intended to be a major contributor. Learning of his stroke, and with no clear knowledge of when he might return to full activity, the Public Relations Committee picked up that task.

He lamented that we haven't done well at upgrading our use of social media and asked for help. But, overall, he was very satisfied with the scope of the association's activities and he relished the opportunity to lead. And we relished his leadership.

Jim had many wonderful characteristics, such as his unique way of bringing closure to debates by quietly and fairly summarizing the arguments and suggesting how the matter could best be resolved. He was an excellent trainer and mentor to new trainers. Not to be overlooked was his expertise at grammar and his wry sense of humor.

His obituary, published in the *San Luis Obispo Tribune* on Mar. 14, 2021, reported that Jim was born and raised in Southern California, graduated from Pomona College and obtained a graduate degree from UC Berkeley. He joined the U.S. State Department in 1962 as a Foreign Service Officer with posts in Barcelona; Bonn, Germany; and Washington, DC before moving to New York City to work in real estate development. Jim returned to Southern California in 1971 for entrepreneurial pursuits and he began a nearly 40-year career in management consulting. While a devoted member of Westwood Presbyterian Church, Jim met Jeanette Hummel. They married in 1988.

Continued on next page

Jim Ragan – continued

After both having raised families in Pacific Palisades, Jim and Jeanette moved to Cambria to enjoy the central coast and pursue their passion for traveling and community work. Jim taught a graduate level course on business negotiation at UC Irvine for many years and was known as an entertaining instructor.

His family held a memorial service in Cambria on March 19. Several CGJA members attended in person and many more via Zoom. It was well-attended; family and friends offered moving tributes. It was organized by Jim's daughter, Vanessa, along with his other daughter, son, daughter-in-law, and grandchildren. New things we learned about Jim were his love for the outdoors, joy in dressing up and acting in local theatrical productions and delight in pulling pranks on adults (but not his children).

Jim's love of community work is remembered by many organizations. He will be missed by those who love him and knew him to be a good, kind, witty man with a wry and teasing sense of humor who donated his time, money, and energy to the communities and causes that were important to him. As we at CGJA encounter problems and decisions, we are likely to wonder "What would Jim say?"

Those wishing to make a donation to CGJA in memory of Jim may do so at cgja.org/donation

2021 Annual Conference Postponed

by Lloyd Bell, Chair, Annual Conference Committee

Due to the uncertainties that are being experienced with the COVID-19 vaccination effort in California, the CGJA Board of Directors has decided to postpone the 2021 CGJA Annual Conference, originally scheduled for October 24-25, 2021 at the Hilton in San Rafael. We anticipate that the 2022 Annual Conference will be held at the same San Rafael location in the fall of 2022 once everyone is comfortable meeting face-to-face again. Details will be announced once they are finalized. The board regrets having to take this action, but feels it is in the best interest of the health considerations of our members.

The Annual Conference Committee, in coordination with the Member and Chapter Relations Committee, will continue to plan for the Annual Membership Meeting that is required by our bylaws. The 2021 Annual Membership Meeting will be a virtual meeting, as was done last year, and will be held on October 25, 2021, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Feedback from the record number of attendees of last year's Zoom meeting indicated that conducting business this way was well-received.

We are pleased to report that **Neil McCormick**, Executive Director of the **California Special Districts Association** has honored his commitment to visit with us and will be our keynote speaker to kick off the membership meeting. Although we hear from Neil during training, we haven't heard from him at an annual meeting since 2003.

Stay up to date by following information as it is posted on the [Annual Conference webpage](#).

Director Nominations Open

by Shirley Boracci, Chair, Nominations and Elections Committee

This is your invitation to become a candidate for the CGJA Board of Directors! Nothing says you cannot nominate yourself. If this is not appealing to you, maybe you know someone who would be ideal for this position.



The board of directors consist of twelve members. Up to six new board members join the six current/continuing members overseeing the operations of CGJA. There are four members from each **region**; two new members are elected or re-elected each year for a term of two years. Board members can serve three consecutive two-year terms. The term of office is November 1, 2021 to October 31, 2023.

Being a director is an extremely rewarding experience! You have direct input in how CGJA carries out its mission to promote, preserve and support the grand jury system. This is accomplished through training, education, and outreach in our communities. The board establishes management-related policies, makes decisions on major issues and generally oversees the association’s activities. These actions are carried out through CGJA’s standing committees.

Requirements:

1. Directors must be voting members of CGJA on July 31, 2021 and throughout their two-year term.
2. Directors must reside in the **region** they represent.

It is desirable for directors to have some experience with CGJA chapters or committees.

Are you interested?

The CGJA **website** has loads of information. Using the pull-down menu, **About CGJA**, go to **Board of Directors** where you will see links to the current agenda and past minutes. Board meetings are held via Zoom and/or telephone on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 3 p.m. You are invited to attend!

Nominations are now open. Send an email message to nominations@cgja.org

Timeline for 2021 nominations, voting, and reporting:

- May 31 – nominations close
- June 18 – candidate statement deadline (for inclusion in the August edition of the *Journal*).
- June 23 – ballots submitted to the Board
- July 31 – membership closes for eligibility to vote
- August 1 – voting begins
- August 31 - voting ends
- September - ballots counted and reported to CGJA President, candidates and *Journal*
- October – results published in the October *Journal*
- October 25 – directors are introduced and given oath of office at Annual Meeting

Contact NEC members for more information regarding the nomination and election process:

Region	North	Central	South
Director	<i>Shirley Boracci</i>	<i>Bob Finlayson</i>	<i>Larry Herbst</i>
Member	<i>Ray Frisbee</i>	<i>Kati Martin</i>	<i>Lanny Larson</i>

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Nominations Open – continued

CGJA Director Responsibilities
CGJA Policy Manual §3.000, CGJA Directors and Officers

3.10 Director Responsibilities

The following are in addition to those duties outlined in Article 6 of the CGJA Bylaws:

- A. Directors shall attend all board meetings except when excused by the president. Directors shall participate in teleconference or face-to-face board meetings at their own expense. Directors may be removed from the board if they fail to participate in two consecutive board meetings or a total of four meetings in any twelve-month period, except when excused by the president for good cause.
- B. Directors shall read and review all agenda packet items in preparation for each board meeting.
- C. Directors shall attend the CGJA Annual Conference and Annual Meeting unless excused by the president and shall attend at their own expense.
- D. Each director shall be active on at least one of CGJA’s committees.
- E. Directors shall monitor and, when necessary, promptly respond to email and voicemail communications regarding the business of the board and their committee(s).
- F. Directors shall avoid personal agendas and put personal differences aside in order to properly and fully satisfy their responsibility to serve the best interests of the association. Directors must become familiar with and be faithful to the association’s missions and goals. Directors shall comply with the adopted Code of Conduct contained in the Directors’ Handbook.
- G. Directors shall assume fiduciary responsibility for the association as required by law.

CGJA Bylaws, Article 6, Directors

Section 4. Duties

It shall be the duty of the directors to:

- (a) Perform any and all duties imposed on them collectively or individually by law, or pursuant to these bylaws and the board’s adopted policies
- (b) Assume fiduciary responsibility for the corporation as required by law
- (c) Prescribe the duties and fix the compensation (if any) of all officers, agents, and employees of the corporation, except as otherwise provided in these bylaws
- (d) Supervise all officers, agents, and employees of the corporation to assure that their duties are performed properly
- (e) Meet at such times and places as required by these bylaws or the policy manual
- (f) Register their address, including any email address, with the secretary of the corporation
- (g) Approve the proposed annual ballot that includes a slate of qualified candidates for director
- (h) Elect officers of the corporation



County	Name
Calaveras	Trudy Craig
Fresno	William C. Smith
Fresno	Rick Juliana
Glenn	Kristi Rumble
Riverside	Thomas Gobrecht
San Luis Obispo	Henry Rible
San Mateo	Joseph Gruber
Santa Barbara	Barbara Chalmers
Trinity	Mark Dowdle
Tulare	Paul Pugh

Nominations Now Open for *Excellence in Reporting Awards*

Best Report

Once again it is time to give serious consideration to nominating an outstanding report for CGJA's Excellence in Reporting award. Reports issued in the preceding five years are eligible.

The deadline for nominations is **June 30**. One nomination per county, please. This nomination can be combined with or made in addition to that for the Media Coverage Award (see accompanying article). The winner will be announced at the CGJA Membership Meeting in the fall.

Last year's winner was [Wildfire Preparedness: A New Approach](#), a report by the 2018-2019 Marin County Grand Jury. View the list of [past winners](#) (these download as PDFs).

The report will compete with other nominations based on the criteria shown below:

- Significance of the issue, topic rationale
- Clear description of the investigation
- Findings follow from verified facts contained in the body of the report
- Recommendations are based on the findings and are realistic
- Clarity of language, objectivity and fairness
- Identified problems and proposed practical solutions
- Impact on the citizenry
- Difficulty and thoroughness of the investigation
- Media coverage
- Agency responses to the report's findings and recommendations
- Positive changes to the community resulting from the report

Please review the above points carefully and assemble the necessary documentation. The most challenging tasks are 1) writing a rationale for why the report should receive the award, and 2) compiling the agency responses and supporting media reports.

Best Media Coverage

Are you aware of outstanding grand jury coverage by a media outlet? If so, consider nominating it for CGJA's best media coverage (Excellence in Reporting) award. The award recognizes a reporter or media entity (print or digital) that provided outstanding coverage of a grand jury's report or the grand jury in general within the preceding five years.

Alex MacLean, reporter for *The Union Democrat*, earned the 2020 award for his numerous articles stemming from the 2017-18 Tuolumne County Grand Jury's report "Tuolumne County Economic Development Authority." [Click here](#) (PDF) and scroll down to view the list of previous winners.

The deadline for nominations is **June 30**. This nomination can be combined with that for Best Grand Jury Report (see left).

Award criteria are the degree to which the nominee

- increased awareness of the county's current or recent civil grand jury.
- reported on the responses to grand jury report(s).
- educated the community about the civil grand jury system in general.
- covered the important aspects of the grand jury report(s).
- provided in-depth reporting vs. superficial account.
- offered extensive reporting (e.g., one-time versus multiple accounts and/or audience reach).

Additional credit is given for providing the public with information on how to obtain/access grand jury reports, apply for local grand jury service, and submit complaints to the grand jury.

The nominator must provide a brief rationale for granting the award (consider the above criteria while writing it) and provide copies of the media articles or any other coverage.

Continued on next page

Excellence in Reporting Awards – *continued*

Nominations may be made only by a CGJA chapter or association for its county. Where there is neither, nominations may be made by a CGJA member who resides in the county.

The submission process is online at the **Excellence in Reporting webpage**. From that page, you can download printer-friendly instructions, including the specific rating criteria used for evaluating the individual nominations.

We look forward to your submission(s) using the **NOMINATION FORM** link at the bottom of the website page.

Please note – while you may not think of a nominee now, you might in the future. Keep a file of media posts (online material may disappear over time) or newspaper clippings about grand jury reports and activities in your county.

News from Around the State

from Placer



The Placer County Board of Supervisors approved February as **Grand Jury Awareness Month**. Six current grand jurors were able to attend the meeting on January 26, 2021.

Foreperson Moore (front right) receives the proclamation from District 2 BOS Robert Weygandt (front left). The grand jury plays an important role in serving as the voice of the people, while also ensuring that local government operations are being conducted effectively and transparently. Learn more about the Placer County Grand Jury [here](#).

***from the Mother Lode* by Linda Toren, Recording Secretary**

The Mother Lode Chapter (representing Amador, Calaveras and Tuolumne) has a logo. It was designed by Calaveras High School graduate and artist, Kelly Baird. She has designed logos for two other Calaveras County organizations, *Friends of the Calaveras County Library* and *Poet Laureate*.

We are the only multiple-county chapter in the state. We provide information to the public about the civil grand jury process, aid with continuity reports and support current grand juries in their respective counties.

Any organization who has searched for a logo knows that the journey takes time. A logo is a visual symbol used to instantly identify a company, organization, product or brand. Logos may show an entity's name spelled out with letters or they may be abstract designs, such as the Nike stripe. It must be appropriate for the different situations in which it will be used, e.g., screens, business cards, letterheads, banners, newspaper adverts, etc. The search required finding elements that represent our region, researching logos for other chapters across the state, and understanding what makes a logo.

We chose water, trees, mountains and the scale of justice. Using those elements, Kelly provided samples of the logo along with font choices and colors. The options bounced back and forth many times resulting in a unique logo with balanced composition and colors that pop.



Recent Board Actions

Board Meeting, February 23, 2021

- Appointed Larry Herbst as director for Southern Region, replacing Ron Zurek.
- Approved 2021 Nominations and Elections Committee members.
- Appointed Diane Lloyd to the Finance Committee.
- Approved CGJA tax preparer change.

Executive Committee Meeting, March 17, 2021

- Appointed Lou Panetta as president for the remaining 2010-21 term.

Board Meeting, March 23, 2021

- Ratified the Executive Committee's appointment of Lou Panetta as President of CGJA for the remainder of the 2021-22 term.
- Approved and established the James Ragan Memorial Fund with the purpose to be determined by the Board of Directors within the next 60 days.
- Ratified the President's appointment of Larry Herbst as Vice President of CGJA for the remainder of the 2021-22 term.

All approved board meeting minutes are available on the CGJA [website](#).

NOTE: We encourage members to attend meetings of the board of directors. They are held on the fourth Tuesday of the month via Zoom (no meetings in July and rarely in December). The agenda along with Zoom information is available a week before the meeting. [Read more.](#)

2020-2021 CGJA Training Program Update

by Marsha Caranci, Chair, Training Committee

The 2020 CGJA training program has rolled over into 2021 and keeps on going, much like the Energizer bunny. We have become a year-round program.

While many courts impaneled a regular grand jury in 2020 and will do so again around July 1 of 2021, some of those juries were not impaneled until the fall. Others were impaneled as late as December or early January, becoming "calendar-year" juries. Some of them will serve for twelve months, and others will serve an extended term so the jury can go back to a fiscal-year term starting in July 2022. A few courts are just now impaneling a grand jury as COVID restrictions become less of a concern.

We started the 2020 training season last June and have a couple more regular training seminars scheduled in April. We will end up having trained over 800 jurors and alternates over that 10-month span. And then we will start over again in June.

We provided two "seasons" of Foreperson and Pro Tem Workshops this year, offering three workshops during the fall months, and two more in January. We have three scheduled for July of 2021.

We trained over 260 jurors during our "fall" Report Writing Workshops. During our first ever "spring" Report Writing Workshop season, we will train another 140 or so jurors, most of whom were impaneled in January.

Lastly, 42 grand jury legal advisors participated in Legal Advisor Workshops in November, December and January. The next round starts in May.

There were times in the fall and early winter months of 2020 when we were presenting regular training seminars, Report Writing Workshops, Foreperson and Pro Tem Workshops and Legal Advisor Workshops all within days or weeks of each other. Most of these sessions were presented remotely using Zoom from our own homes – at least we knew where we were each day!

We expect to train around 35 grand juries during the summer months and a few next January (those that plan to remain on a calendar-year). Other courts won't impanel a new jury until July of 2022. See page 10 for our training schedule. In addition to those workshops, some of the regular training sessions will begin in June.

The CGJA trainers have been amazing through all of this – adjusting to these changes and learning to present the curriculum very effectively using Zoom. In the midst of this busy schedule, we continue to improve our presentations with our yearly curriculum revisions.

Sadly, we have lost a number of trainers this past year. COVID concerns, personal health issues, moves out-of-state and two deaths have taken a toll. Those of us who are left remain dedicated to providing the best training possible to grand jurors and legal advisors, giving them the tools and knowledge that they need to be successful.

If you have any questions about our 2021 CGJA training program, contact Marsha Caranci, Chair, CGJA Training Committee, cgjatraining@cgja.org.

Ask the Trainer by Marsha Caranci, CGJA Training Chair



This regular column allows the CGJA training team to share with Journal readers our responses to questions we receive from grand jurors. Please remember: Do not take any response as legal advice, and contact your local legal advisors to answer any question that might divulge confidential information.

Please submit your questions to me at cgjatraining@cgja.org. Our response to your edited or redacted question might appear in a future edition of the Journal.

Q. Can a grand jury investigate how a board of supervisors responds to residents' complaints?

A. Penal Code §925 allows the grand jury to investigate any of the "operations, accounts, and records" of the county. We read that section to mean any operations of any county board, commission, committee, department, office or officer — as long as the grand jury does not comment on the merit, wisdom or expediency of an entity's substantive policy determinations. (78 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 290)

If the county does not have a policy for responding to complaints, the grand jury can recommend the board develop a policy, but if a policy already exists, the jury should not comment on the particulars of what it says since the board has the sole authority to shape policy. The jury can look at how the policy was put into place (whether the board adopted the ordinance or policy at an open meeting pursuant to the Brown Act, for example), whether the board and its staff are following the adopted policy or whether a problem exists which the board should address by developing a policy.

Q. How are other grand juries performing their jail inspections during COVID-19?

A. Penal Code section 919(b) requires only that the grand jury "inquire into the condition and management of the public prisons each year." Ordinarily, the term "public prisons" refers to state prison facilities, but the grand jury certainly has jurisdiction to also investigate the county jail and/or juvenile hall.

If your grand jury routinely "inquires" into a local jail facility, there are ways to do that without actually taking a tour. You might request copies of the biennial reports that the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) issues on local detention facilities within each county. You can also set up a remote interview by video conference with the jail commander.

Keep in mind that there is no requirement for any kind of report on any of these facilities. If the grand jury is going to issue a report, it must be based on a full and complete investigation, not just a single tour, review of a report or interview.

For more on CGJA's recommendations regarding detention facility inquiries and investigations, go to [Documents related to Jails and Prisons](#) and click on ***Detention Facility Inspection Guidance During the COVID 19 Pandemic***. If the jury is interested in writing a report, it should see ***Reporting on Jails and Prisons*** on the [same page](#).

Continued on next page

Ask the Trainer – continued

Q. If our grand jury is working on a report about a topic that was reported on by a previous grand jury, can we re-use some of the original report? Can references that are still relevant be recited? Can references be made to the interviews conducted by the previous grand jury?

A. No portion of a previous report can be used in your grand jury's report. Each grand jury is required to base any report they release on their own investigation. If records from the previous grand jury's investigation were formally passed forward to your grand jury, you can read that information to learn more about the topic.

However, your grand jury's report can only include information that is verified during your own investigation, and interviews must be conducted again. Any jurors who served on last year's jury are sworn to secrecy and may not reveal to other jurors anything they know about the topic that does not appear in the report that was released or in the investigation file if it was passed forward.

2021 CGJA Training Dates Announced

The CGJA Training Committee is pleased to announce the following training dates for 2021:

Grand jury training seminars for jurors and alternates

To be scheduled for each grand jury as requested; can be arranged by contacting cgjatraining@cgja.org.

Foreperson and pro tem workshops

Three workshops, each consisting of two half-day sessions (1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. each day) to be presented on Zoom:

Thursday and Friday, July 8 and 9 (registration deadline June 30)

Wednesday and Thursday, July 14 and 15 (registration deadline July 5)

Monday and Tuesday, July 19 and 20 (registration deadline July 12)

Report writing workshops

Can be scheduled for individual grand juries if all 19 members will attend, or jurors can attend one of these multi-county workshops, consisting of two half-day sessions (9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. each day) to be presented on Zoom:

Closed: March 29 and 30 (registration deadline was March 19)

Thursday and Friday, April 15 and 16 (registration deadline April 5)

Thursday and Friday, May 6 and 7 (registration deadline April 26)

Monday and Tuesday, June 7 and 8 (registration deadline May 27)

Additional report writing workshops will be scheduled in the fall of 2021, dates to be announced.

Legal advisors' workshops

The State Bar has authorized CGJA as an MCLE provider. CGJA offers MCLE credit to grand jury legal advisors who attend one of our Legal Advisors' Workshops, which will be held during two half-day sessions (9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. each day), presented on Zoom:

Thursday and Friday, May 20 and 21 (registration deadline May 10)

Thursday and Friday, August 26 and 27, 2021 (registration deadline August 16)

Thursday and Friday, January 27 and 28, 2022 (registration deadline January 17)

More detailed information and online registration for the workshops listed above can be found on our website at cgja.org/training-general-information.

Or, for further information, contact Marsha Caranci at cgjatraining@cgja.org.

California Grand Jurors' Association Balance Sheet, as of December 31, 2020

	Total
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
1000 General Fund	
1004 Chase Checking	68,086
1006 Chase Savings	225
1051 Training Reserve	30,000
1053 J. Zepp Fund	2,200
1055 Rainy Day Fund	12,863
1056 Training Scholarship	4,000
1058 Bill Trautman Memorial Fund	4,410
Total 1006 Chase Savings	\$53,699
Total 1000 General Fund	\$121,784
Total Bank Accounts	\$121,784
Total Current Assets	\$121,784
Fixed Assets	
2900 Property and Equipment	
2911 Fixed Assets	8,253
2951 Accumulated Depreciation	-7,914
Total 2911 Fixed Assets	\$339
TOTAL ASSETS	\$122,123
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Total Liabilities	\$783
Equity	
2310 Retained Earnings	86,275
Net Income	35,066
Total Equity	\$121,340
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$122,123

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California Grand Jurors' Association
Budget vs. Actuals: FY2020 (Jan 2020 -Dec 2020) - FY19 P&L
December 31, 2020

	YTD Actuals	Total Budget	Over Budget
Income			
3000 Administration Income			
Total 3000 Administration Income	\$14	\$20	-\$6
Total 3200 Finance Committee Income	\$5,703	\$3,850	\$1,853
Total 3400 Membership Relations	\$9,015	\$7,400	\$1,615
Total 3500 Other Work Groups Income	\$728	\$1,655	-\$928
Total 3600 Annual Conference	\$0	\$9,850	-\$9,850
Total 3700 Public Relations	\$46	\$50	-\$4
Total 3800 Publications and Merchandise	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total 3900 Training	\$58,330	\$120,175	-\$61,845
Total Income	\$74,335	\$143,000	-\$68,665
Expenses			
Total 4000 Administration	\$4,056	\$7,140	-\$3,084
Total 5000 Finance Committee Expenses	\$1,970	\$3,225	-\$1,255
Total 6000 Membership Committee Expenses	\$0	\$600	-\$600
Total 7000 Other Committee Expense	\$1,374	\$1,955	-\$581
Total 7500 Annual Conference Expenses	\$600	\$7,590	-\$6,990
Total 8000 Public Relations Committee	\$1,581	\$2,803	-\$1,222
Total 9000 Training Committee Expenses	\$29,690	\$119,200	-\$89,510
Total Expenses	\$39,270	\$142,513	-\$103,243
Net Income	\$35,066	\$487	\$34,579

Keep us Posted

Send us your chapter or association news and accomplishments. Format articles in Word and send as email attachments to Barbara Sommer editor@cgja.org. For more details see [How to submit an article](#).

DEADLINE for submitting articles for publication in the next issue

May 24, 2021

Change of address - Please notify the editor@cgja.org of any email address changes.

The mission of the CGJA is to promote, preserve, and support the grand jury system through training, education, and outreach.

Contacts: [Officers and directors](#), chapter and association [presidents](#).