



## Charleston County News Release

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See photo: <http://www.charlestoncounty.org/newsimages/koreanjudges.htm>

### Charleston County Clerk of Court Hosts Korean Delegation

On Dec. 3 and 4, Charleston County's Clerk of Court hosted eight judges and court officials from the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea. The visitors came to observe the local court system because the adoption of a jury system in Korea is currently being considered.

During the two-day period, the delegation expressed its wishes to specifically learn more about oral arguments and proceedings, how judges preside over jury trials, as well as various details regarding trial procedures.

The guests had the opportunity to observe civil jury trials and to speak with Judges R. Markley Dennis, Jr. and Thomas L. Hughston, Jr. as well as other court officials.

"We are honored the Charleston County Clerk's office was selected by the Korean Delegation and the National Center for State Courts as a model for judicial efficiency," said Julie Armstrong, Clerk of Court for Charleston County.

Before a jury system can be implemented in Korea, members of the judiciary must become accustomed to oral arguments and proceedings. As of now, their trial procedures rely heavily on written affidavits.

The Korean Supreme Court feels that the best way to understand the nature and limits of oral arguments is to observe such practices in action. As the U.S. has been a model for trial procedures and jurisprudence, the National Center for State Courts was certain that through the visit, Korean judges and officials would gain invaluable experience and knowledge.

Korea has been conducting vigorous judicial reforms to promote greater use of oral arguments and proceedings during trials. It is the Korean Supreme Court's opinion that such oral arguments provide a more accurate version of the truth, with lively discussions more apt to protect the parties' rights and liberties.

The National Center for State Courts assisted in facilitating the visit through its International Visitor Program. The Korean officials also traveled to Washington, D.C. and New York City during their stay in the U.S. Interpreters were needed during the visit, and the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea provided funding for this service.

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