



Superior Court Law Library gets makeover

It once was a simple library – forlorn book-lined shelves, a computer or two. Almost completely analog. That was then.

On Feb. 8, court officials gathered in Pima County Superior Court to officially open the new Law Library and Resource Center.

“You all must be tremendously proud,” Arizona Supreme Court Chief Justice Scott Bales told those gathered for the dedication. The chief justice said the newly remodeled library was now much more than a collection of books and journals, but a resource center for all the public.



The new Law Library and Resource Center, located on the second floor of Superior Court, 110 W. Congress Street, marks a new vision of how the court assists residents seeking general legal advice and those with more specific needs, especially those representing themselves in legal matters.

The redesigned resource center coincides with Justice Bales' Strategic Agenda plan for state courts titled “Advancing Justice Together: Courts and Communities.” Key among the goals of the plan is the use of technology to provide the public with better access to justice.

Goals of the plan include expanded access to web-based forms, e-filing, court forms and information describing legal terms and court procedures, all of which the new resource center provides.

The plan also seeks to make the law libraries in state courts more effective locations for people to acquire pro bono legal advice and referrals and attend legal workshops.

“We wanted to be mindful [as we planned this remodel] that this will be a place for everybody, self-represented litigants and attorneys alike,” Pima County Superior Court Presiding Judge Kyle Bryson said.

The newly dedicated Law Library and Resource Center has 24 work stations, 17 computer terminals, two offices for consultations and a soon-to-be converted hearing room that will be used for training events and workshops.

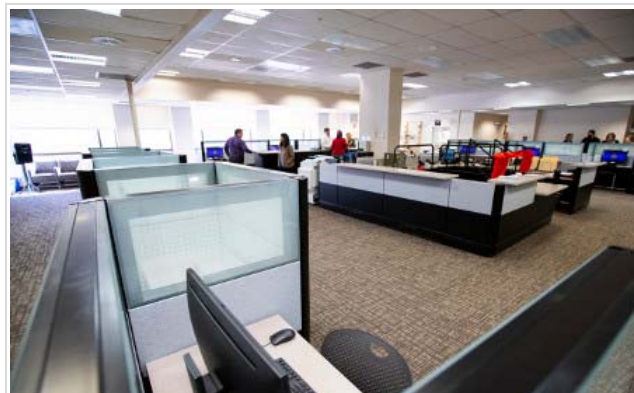
Bryson said he had concerns initially about removing most of the books that previously filled the shelves of the law library interior.

“I’m a book guy,” he said.

Bales, too, said he has a lifelong appreciation for books.

“The library for me was always a haven,” he said. “Every week I still go to the library just like I go to the grocery store.”

While many older volumes are no longer on the shelves, there are many books still available for the public’s use. Additionally, staff is on site to provide



Recently available.

Both Bryson and Bales thanked Superior Court staff who helped conceive and design the new library. Bryson also thanked court staff from Maricopa County, who previously updated that county's law library and inspired some of the changes here.

"Part of me hates to admit this," Bryson said, "but the idea for this came from Maricopa County."

Wherever the idea came from, the Superior Court welcomes all to its resource center, open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., excluding court holidays. Visit www.sc.pima.gov or call 724-8456 for more information.

Photos: (Top) - From left, Pima County Superior Court Presiding Judge Kyle Bryson, Supreme Court Chief Justice Scott Bales and Court Administrator Ron Overholt cut the ribbon on the revamped library. (Bottom) The library boasts 24 work stations.