

## Welcome Doctors

Judges from the 13<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit will welcome medical doctors, medical students and PhD's from the University of South Florida colleges of medicine, nursing, public health and pharmacy on Tuesday for the fourth Black Robe day.

The day mirrors Tampa General Hospital's White Coat Mini-Internship Program, pairing physicians, pharmacists and other healthcare professionals with judges to observe what happens in court. This will be the first time that medical students participate, according to Judge Gregory Holder, who along with Dr. Stephen Klasko, USF vice president and dean of the Morsani College of Medicine, and Dr. Jay Wolfson, who holds a doctorate in public health and a law degree, worked to bring this program to life.

"The docs really enjoy the opportunity to interact with judges," Holder said. "Normally, they would only be in court if, God forbid, they are accused of malpractice or as an expert witness. This program allows them to pull back the curtain and see the Wizard of Oz is really just a little man or woman."

Doctors and lawyers don't always see things eye-to-eye, but 19 health professionals are expected to spend the morning with 26 judges, as well as members of the American Board of Trial Advocates, who work to elevate the standards of ethics, integrity, civility and courtesy in the legal profession. The judges won't comment, but the lawyers could have something to say about preserving the independence of the judiciary and this year's merit retention election of Florida Supreme Court justices.