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2020 Family Guardianship Expo Held at Stetson University

CLEARWATER - If I have a child who is autistic, can I use his disability benefits to help build an apartment for him on my property? If someone is a veteran who had been exposed to Agent Orange, what type of benefits is she or he entitled to? If my ward's stock holdings improve, do I, as a guardian, have to report the uptick on documents that need to be periodically filed? This is just a handful of the issues raised at the 2020 Family Guardian Expo that took place Friday, Jan. 24, 2020, at Stetson College of Law in Gulfport from 1 to 5 p.m.

After each was introduced by Pinellas-Pasco Circuit Judge Pamela Campbell, a half dozen experts in their respective fields spoke, from Jill Cicero, a training specialist with the Pinellas Clerk of the Circuit Court, through which guardians file required documents, to Stetson professor Stacey-Rae Simcox, a specialist in veterans benefits, to Gerald Siebens, an attorney for the Agency for Persons and Disabilities, to Travis Finchum, a lawyer whose specialty is social security benefits.

There were also, in a separate space, representatives from different agencies available to discuss what resources there are to help guardians with a specific set of circumstances, including AARP, the Alzheimer's Association, Lighthouse of Pinellas for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and the National Alliance on Mental Illness. In addition to Judge Campbell, Pinellas-Pasco Circuit Judge Sherwood Coleman was on hand to answer questions. They are the two probate judges in Pinellas County who also preside over guardianship cases. Roughly 100 people attended.



Judge Pamela Campbell begins the expo by introducing the first speaker.