



16th Circuit Court, Jackson County, Missouri

NEWS RELEASE

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Family Court Commissioner Molly Merrigan Honored with National Award on Eve of Retirement

Family Court Commissioner Molly Merrigan was honored with the Judge Goldstein award today at the National Association of Drug Court Professionals in National Harbor, Md. The award is in honor of the very first drug court judge in the United States, and is given annually to an individual who has made significant contributions to the drug court field. It came on the eve of her retirement from the Jackson County Family Court after 16 years of service handling Family Drug Court matters, adoptions, and abuse and neglect cases.

“Having been able to meet Judge Goldstein and observe him in his courtroom, I am incredibly honored to receive this award,” Merrigan said.

Merrigan announced her retirement in May and her last day on the bench is July 31. She was appointed in December 1998 by the court en banc. During her tenure, Jackson County’s Family Drug Court was nationally recognized in 2012 by the U.S. Justice Department’s Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention as one of five Peer Learning Courts in the country. She has received numerous awards that recognize her work in this field including: the Claire McCaskill Award from the Missouri Association of Drug Court Professionals in 2008, and the National Association of Drug Court Professionals Distinguished Board Service Award in 2008.

“It has been my honor and privilege to serve as commissioner,” Merrigan said.

Following retirement from the Court, Merrigan will work as a consultant to other drug courts through two national organizations – the National Drug Court Institute, and Children and Family Futures.

Prior to her appointment to the bench, Merrigan was employed with the Jackson County Prosecutor’s Office and worked as the lead assistant prosecuting attorney handling Drug Court cases. She is also a certified substance abuse counselor, and had worked at a residential drug and alcohol treatment facility.

Merrigan earned her law degree from the University of Missouri--Kansas City School of Law, and her bachelor’s degree from Rockhurst University.

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