



**CLERK OF THE SUPREME COURT
STATE OF MISSOURI
POST OFFICE BOX 150
JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI**

THOMAS F. SIMON
CLERK

65102
(573) 751-4144

MARY EPPING
DEPUTY COMMUNICATIONS COUNSEL
mary.eppingt@courts.mo.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

15 January 2010

**SUPREME COURT TO RECOGNIZE 16TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
FOR HOLDING TIMELY CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT HEARINGS
AND TO PRESENT ASTAR AWARD TO TWO LOCAL JUDGES**

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Presiding Judge Stephen Nixon is scheduled to receive, on behalf of the 16th Judicial Circuit (Jackson County), the Permanency Award from Supreme Court Judge Zel Fischer during a special ceremony at 1:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 25, at the Family Justice Center in Kansas City, Mo. This is the fourth time the 16th Circuit has won the Permanency Award. Also during the ceremony, Fischer is scheduled to present Associate Circuit Judge Jeffrey Bushur and Circuit Judge John Torrence with the ASTAR award. The ASTAR (Advanced Science and Technology Adjudication Resource) award is given to judges who have taken 120 hours of court-related science and technology classes and obtained the acquired skills of ASTAR trial judges. Media are welcome to attend this ceremony. The Family Justice Center is located at 625 E. 26th Street.

The Permanency Award is given to circuits for successfully holding timely hearings during fiscal 2009 in child abuse and neglect cases in which children removed from their homes are to be reunited with their families or are to be placed in another permanent home as soon as possible. The 16th circuit is one of 23 judicial circuits that will receive the award this year.

ASTAR judges are trained in scientific and technological topics, including addiction treatment technologies, neuroscience evidence, advanced genetic technologies, computer forensics and cybercrime, DNA science, and advanced forensic technologies. Judges who have earned the ASTAR award will take case assignments as well as help plan and develop educational programs for other judges. They will help train non-ASTAR judges, serve as a resource about various scientific topics in cases, and act as liaisons to law schools, bar associations and the public. Bushur and Torrence are two of 19 judges who will receive this award this year.

###