

Nineteenth Judicial Circuit Employee Recognition: Fact Sheet

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Nineteenth Judicial Circuit Employees Earn Recognition

“As you know, we are here to recognize members of the 19th Judicial Circuit’s staff who have been nominated and selected by their peers for their exceptional services during 2016 in the following areas: Environmental Sustainability; Kay S. Finn and Sarah G. Anderson Exceptional Employee; Lawrence Bonds Officer of the Year; Leadership and Excellence; the Employee of the Year; and the Golden Gavel Award”, said Chief Judge George Ortiz as he welcomed the Circuit’s employees in Waukegan and in Vernon Hills.

The **“Kay S. Finn and Sarah G. Anderson Exceptional Employee Award”** is given to a non-sworn administrative employee who demonstrates noteworthy support of the Circuit’s mission. The recipient of this year’s award is Olivia Pupilava. Olivia illustrates high standards of service and effective communication skills with the public, as well as with other county departments and the people she works with. She has earned the respect of her peers and is recognized as a valuable resource. She is known to go the extra mile to support the needs of others and always delivers her service with a smile. Olivia is a Laboratory Clerk in Adult Probation.

The **“Lawrence Bonds Officer of the Year Award”** was awarded to Colleen Gavin-Obenauf, a Principal Probation Officer at Adult Probation. Assisting the Chief Judge in handing out the award were several members of Officer Bonds family. They joined Judge Ortiz in thanking Colleen for her professionalism, personal ethics and her integrity in the work place. She is very passionate about her job and her work with high-risk offenders. She is well respected by her co-workers and is a wonderful role model. Her clients also appreciate her dedication and the dignity and respect with which she treats them. She frequently receives appreciation from them in the form of cards, letters and hugs.

Robert Cesar, Director of Juvenile Probation and Detention Services, was named the recipient of the **“Leadership and Excellence Award.”** The award is presented to a judicial staff employee who excels in the areas of commitment to the organization’s values and ethics as well as leadership and innovation. Bob has held many positions in the Juvenile Division in his 35 years with the organization and was appointed Director in 2006. Bob has been recognized for his resourcefulness, commitment and dedication in his work with juveniles and has contributed to the improvement and quality of services to the youth and families in Lake County as well as the state.

The **“Employee of the Year”** for 2015 is Sharon Klapperich, a Principal Probation Officer in Adult Probation. Sharon is being honored by her co-workers for her willingness to assist anyone who needs help in getting the job done, regardless of what the task entails. She devotes much of her time to the interstate/intrastate process and clients. She guides her fellow probation officers in learning the process and explains the interstate/intrastate process to each new set of interns. In 2016, she assisted in the development of a new system and provided guidance at the State level by serving as the Interstate/Intrastate Committee Chair for the Illinois Probation and Court Services Association.

The **“Environmental Sustainability Award”** is presented to an employee or organization for their dedication to green practices both in the workplace and in the community that promotes recycling, waste reduction and energy conservation. This year, the award was given to Chris

Morgan for her dedication to organic gardening. Chris was an early believer that chemical fertilizers and pesticides are harmful to humans, animals and the earth. Chris has shared a variety of lettuce, red, green and purple peppers, great tomatoes, cucumbers and herbs with her colleagues at Adult Probation. Chris's commitment to organic gardening and what she is able to produce from her garden is a model for all who wish to commit to clean eating of organic food.

New for 2016 is the "**Golden Gavel Award**". This award is presented to an individual or team of the judicial branch who supports the mission of the 19th Judicial Circuit ". . . to serve the public." The honorees demonstrate commitment to quality service, model professionalism, promote customer satisfaction and present a positive image on behalf of the Court. One award for each of the Courts three main locations is available.

The first award from Juvenile Probation and Detention Services was given to Mary Marsolek, the Community Resource Liaison of Juvenile Probation. Mary has been a central presence at the facility since 1976 and is considered a walking resource book by her colleagues. She is involved in countless community organizations which helps her maintain and enhance relationships with community organizations. Additionally, she assists with juveniles in crisis by contacting appropriate outside organizations and follows through to be sure the situation is resolved. She is considered a very valuable staff member and a role model who exemplifies the organization's values internally and externally.

The initial 2016 Golden Gavel Award for the main Courthouse Campus is awarded to the staff of Jury Commission. The team is led by Jury Coordinator, Jodi Luka. Cassie Smith and Jennifer Kane are integral to the operations. Whether in-person or over the phone, jurors and potential jurors are treated with respect and cheerfulness. Although some are excited by the prospect of being a juror, often times they are recalcitrant and want to know how they can get out of their civic duty. The staff do an excellent job reassuring the person that they are capable of serving and doing what they can to accommodate that person's needs while still following appropriate guidelines and the law of Illinois. They are pleasant and professional at all times.

The team is also dedicated to reducing costs. When the law in Illinois changed and juror compensation increased dramatically the Jury Commission staff altered the way the way jurors were summoned to minimize cost increases. Ms. Luka is also a certified sign-interpreter and is frequently called upon to interpret for the Court. It is these type of attributes, skills and qualities, working together in a cooperative manner, that represents the values of the 19th Judicial Circuit and why they are the recipient of the 2016 Golden Gavel Award for the main Courthouse Campus.