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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: David J. Remondini
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January 16, 2001

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Supreme Court Seeking Briefs On Indigent Civil Legal Aid Statute

[State of the Judiciary](#)

The Indiana Supreme Court is seeking "friend of court" briefs from a host of groups to help the Court rule on a statute that specifies that a civil litigant is entitled to appointment of counsel if he or she is indigent, according to a court [order](#) issued today.

This request is prompted by a Court of Appeals case pending before the Supreme Court, *Sholes v. Sholes*, 732 N.E2d 1252 (Ind. Ct. App. 2000), which is available on the Internet at www.state.in.us/judiciary/opinions/wpd/08140001.pds.doc.

In *Sholes*, the Court of Appeals ruled, among other issues, that the indigent litigant was statutorily entitled by Ind. Code 34-10-1-2 to the appointment of an attorney in his civil case.

Because of the important legal and policy issues and the impact on Indiana's court systems and communities, the Court has invited interested parties to submit "friend of the court" or amicus curiae briefs on three issues: Does the statute require appointment of counsel for indigent civil litigants? If so, is the attorney to be paid? If the attorney is entitled to be paid, who is responsible for the payment?

"One issue that has come up in these cases is how an inmate with a civil legal claim can get legal counsel since most legal services organizations in Indiana are restricted by law from representing inmates. The Court would also be interested in learning how those restrictions impact this statute," said David J. Remondini, Counsel to Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard.

Groups interested in filing amicus briefs should file a petition with the Court asking for permission to appear as amicus curiae on or before February 5, 2001. Those petitions should indicate if groups are submitting joint briefs. Briefs approved for submission, of no more than 8,000 words, will be due February 26, 2001. The Court will take the matter under advisement and could elect to hold oral argument.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 18, 2001

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Chief Justice To Deliver Annual State Of The Judiciary Address

Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard will make his annual State of the Judiciary address to the Indiana General Assembly at 1:30 p.m. on Monday, January 22, 2001 in the Indiana House Chamber. The address will last just under one hour. Copies of his remarks to the legislature, which are required by Article 7 Section 3 of the Indiana Constitution, will be distributed to the news media prior to the speech.

If you would like a copy of the speech sent via email to you please contact David Remondini at (317) 233-8684 or email him at dremondi@courts.state.in.us.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 28, 2001

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Commission on Judicial Qualifications Files Charges Against Two Indiana Judges

[State of the Judiciary](#)

The Indiana Commission on Judicial Qualifications filed today formal disciplinary charges against two Indiana judges. In the first case, Matter of Funke, Cause No. 40S00-0102-JD-136, the Commission charged Judge James Funke, Jr., Jennings Superior Court, with several violations of the Code of Judicial Conduct stemming from his actions on protective order cases against Jennings Northwest Regional Utilities (JNRU). The Commission charged that Judge Funke's family's interests in the local controversy surrounding JNRU required his disqualification in the series of protective order cases filed in his court against JNRU. The Commission further charged Judge Funke with misconduct for continuing to rule in the cases even after his disqualification. The Commission also charged Judge Funke with violating his administrative and judicial duties by permitting clerk's employees to use his signature stamp on protective orders when the petitions were filed and before the judge considered the merits of the requests. This practice led to an incident in which Judge Funke's father filed for a protective order, on which the clerk's office affixed Judge Funke's signature stamp, leading to the impression that he had ruled on his father's case.

In Matter of Spencer, Cause No. 48S00-0102-JD-137, the Indiana Commission on Judicial Qualifications charged Judge Fredrick R. Spencer, Madison Circuit Court, with violating the ethical rules for judicial candidates. While running for re-election in 2000, Judge Spencer ran a television advertisement in which it was stated, "When Judge Spencer ran for judge of the Circuit Court, he promised to send more child molesters to jail...burglars to jail...drug dealers to jail...". The advertisement depicted a cell door slamming shut with each statement. In conclusion, the narrator said, "He's kept his promise. Let's keep Judge Spencer". The Commission charged Judge Spencer with violating the rules which prohibit judicial candidates from making pledges or promises of conduct in office other than faithfully and impartially performing judicial duties, which prohibit judicial candidates from making statements which commit or appear to commit the candidate to the outcomes of cases, and which require candidates to maintain the dignity appropriate to the judicial office.

Judge Funke and Judge Spencer may answer the charges within twenty days. The Supreme Court then will appoint two panels of three Masters each, sitting Indiana judges, to preside over each case. Ultimately, the Supreme Court will review the cases to determine whether misconduct was proven and, if so, the Court will issue an appropriate sanction in each case. Sanctions in judicial disciplinary cases may involve private reprimands, public reprimands, suspensions from office without pay, removal from office, or disbarment.

Questions about this Press Release may be directed to Meg Babcock, Counsel to the Indiana Commission on Judicial Qualifications, at (317) 232-4706.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 1, 2001

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Five Bulgarian Judges Visit to Learn about Indiana Judiciary

Five judges from Bulgaria will be visiting Indiana later this month to learn about Indiana's judiciary from the Indiana Supreme Court and members of the Court's staff, Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard announced today.

The five judges are visiting several locations in the United States as part of a trip arranged by the National Center for State Courts in Williamsburg, VA. They will be in Indianapolis on March 8-10, 2001.

On March 9, the judges and two interpreters will meet with Chief Justice Shepard, State Court Administrator Lilly Judson, Judicial Center executive director Jane Seigel, and Supreme Court Administrator Douglas Cressler.

The judges will also attend a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Indiana Judicial Conference, which helps set judicial education policy and oversees several court-run programs.

The Bulgarian judges are:

Borislav Belaselkov, Judge, Supreme Court of Cassation

Minko Minkov, Chairman of the District Court, Gabrovo

Elena Avdeva, Chairman of the District Court, Blagoevgrad

Boyka Popova, Judge Supreme Court of Cassation

Evgeniy Staykov, Chairman of the Sofia Court of Appeal.

Interpreters Yonko Memersky and Stoyko Stoykov will also accompany them.

The judges will also spend Saturday in Indianapolis before traveling to Washington DC on Sunday.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 3, 2001

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Judicial Commission Charges Judge Raymond Kern

[State of the Judiciary](#)

On May 2, 2001, the Indiana Commission on Judicial Qualifications filed formal judicial disciplinary charges before the Indiana Supreme Court against Judge Raymond Kern, judge of the Lawrence Superior Court I. The Commission charges that Judge Kern violated the rules of judicial ethics, including the rule against granting relief without a hearing, when he issued a custody order on September 5, 2000.

In that custody case, a child's father presented a statement to Judge Kern alleging that the child's mother was attempting to remove the child from a school in Washington County and requesting an order giving custody to the father. Despite Judge Kern's knowledge that the mother's lawyer objected to the order and requested a hearing, and despite the fact that the child in fact was enrolled in school in Lawrence County and it was the father who was attempting to remove the child from that school, Judge Kern granted the custody order the afternoon it was filed.

The Commission charged that Judge Kern violated the rules which require judges to uphold the integrity and independence of the judiciary, to act at all times in a manner which promotes the public's confidence in the judiciary, to dispose of all matters fairly, and to grant every person with a legal interest in a proceeding the right to be heard. The Commission also charged Judge Kern with willful misconduct in office and conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice.

Judge Kern may file an Answer to the charges within 20 days. Thereafter, the Supreme Court will appoint a panel of Masters, three Indiana judges, who will preside over an evidentiary hearing and report to the Supreme Court. If misconduct is established, the sanctions which the Supreme Court may impose include a reprimand, suspension from office without pay, or removal from office.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 23, 2001

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Indianapolis Attorney Sally Franklin Zweig Appointed to Disciplinary Commission

Attorney Sally Franklin Zweig of Indianapolis was appointed to the Disciplinary Commission of the Indiana Supreme Court, Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard announced today.

She will serve a five-year term beginning next month. She replaces Indianapolis attorney Julia Blackwell Gelinias, who was originally appointed in 1991.

"The Disciplinary Commission needs members who are of high moral character and who understand the challenges faced on a daily basis by Indiana lawyers. Ms. Zweig is well qualified on both counts," said Associate Justice Theodore R. Boehm, who recommended Ms. Zweig to the Court.

"We are also grateful for the service provided to the Court by Ms. Gelinias," Justice Boehm added.

Ms. Zweig earned her law degree in 1986 from the Indiana University School of Law. She concentrates her practice in complex commercial litigation and health care law and has a special expertise in the area of art law.

The nine-member Disciplinary Commission investigates complaints against attorneys and prosecutes them when there is a reasonable belief an attorney has engaged in misconduct. The Court has the final say in all attorney discipline matters. At least two members of the Commission must be non-lawyers. Members receive no salary for their service.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 23, 2001

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South Bend Attorney Anthony M. Zappia Appointed to Disciplinary Commission

Attorney Anthony M. Zappia of South Bend was appointed to the Disciplinary Commission of the Indiana Supreme Court, Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard announced today.

He will serve a five-year term beginning next month. He replaces South Bend attorney Thomas J. Brunner, Jr., who was originally appointed in 1996.

"The Court believes that Mr. Zappia's past experience as a deputy prosecutor, lawyer in private practice, president of the local bar association, and member of the St. Joseph Superior Court Judicial Nominating Commission, makes him an ideal choice for service on the Supreme Court Disciplinary Commission. As one who has known Mr. Zappia for many, many years, I know he will bring a deep commitment to our legal system and keen sense of fairness to this important work. The Court appreciates his willingness to serve," said Associate Justice Frank Sullivan Jr., who recommended Mr. Zappia for appointment to the Court.

"We are also grateful for the service provided to the Court by Mr. Brunner," Justice Sullivan added.

Mr. Zappia received his law degree from Valparaiso University School of Law in 1976 and maintains a private practice in South Bend. The nine-member Disciplinary Commission investigates complaints against attorneys and prosecutes them when there is a reasonable belief an attorney has engaged in misconduct. The Court has the final say in attorney discipline matters. At least two of the nine members of the Commission must be non-lawyers. Members receive no salary for their service.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 24, 2001

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Self-Service Legal Center Opens for Business on the Internet

Fort Wayne, Ind. -- An Internet-based Family Law Self-Service Legal Center that was developed by a team of judges, county clerks, law professors, and legal aid professionals is now online, Indiana Chief Justice Shepard Randall T. Shepard announced today.

The website is the work of the Pro Se Advisory Committee, chaired by the Hon. David Holt of the Greene Superior Court. The Committee appointed by the Supreme Court earlier this year to help citizens without attorneys navigate the legal system in the family law area.

One of the Committee's first projects was to develop a website. The results can be found at www.state.in.us/judiciary and clicking on "[Self-Service Legal Center.](#)"

"We believe the Self-Service website will be an excellent resource for people who choose to come to the Courthouse, for whatever reason, without lawyers. The Committee is working on other projects that we believe will be very useful to our citizens," Judge Holt said.

Lisbeth Blosser, Clerk of the Allen Circuit and Superior Courts and a member of the Pro Se Advisory Committee, joined the Chief Justice at Friday's announcement.

"Until today, the system offered little help to the growing numbers of citizens who make the choice to represent themselves in court. This web site is an important step forward to help increase citizen access to the judicial system," she said.

Currently, the Self-Service Legal Center has downloadable forms and instructions for couples without children who are seeking a divorce. Soon, the Committee plans to add forms and instructions for other family law matters. Translations in Spanish will also be available.

The Pro Se Advisory Committee will also assist in the development of pilot programs for self-represented litigants in the Marion and Tippecanoe County court systems and with an Indiana Legal Services, Inc. project for self-represented litigants in Monroe County.

The one-year project is funded by a \$50,000 grant that the Supreme Court obtained from the State Justice Institute. It was initiated after a group of Indiana trial judges encouraged the Supreme Court to develop a response to the growing number of unrepresented litigants.

"Many states are trying to find ways to make sure the litigants who come to court without lawyers can receive fair and just treatment in our judicial system. This project will try to help our citizens get the service they need from the legal system," said Chief Justice Shepard.

The Supreme Court has hired Anthony Zapata, formerly of the Indianapolis-based Neighborhood Christian Legal Clinic, to serve as project director for one-year. He begins work on August 27, 2001. His telephone number is 317.234.1873. His email is azapata@courts.state.in.us.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 27 , 2001

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Anthony Zapata to Serve as Pro Se Project Director

Indianapolis attorney Anthony Zapata has been appointed to serve as the pro se project director for the Supreme Court's Division of State Court Administration, Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard announced today.

Originally from Brownsville, Texas, Mr. Zapata joined the project after serving as an attorney with the Neighborhood Christian Legal Clinic and earlier with the Marion County Public Defender Agency. He graduated from the Indiana University School of Law where he was president of the Hispanic Law Society.

"Mr. Zapata's background makes him ideally suited for this project. I am looking forward to seeing him shape it into something that will benefit Hoosiers everywhere," said Chief Justice Shepard.

His position is being funded for one year with a grant from the State Justice Institute to develop a statewide program to assist litigants who do not have lawyers make their way through the legal system. The primary focus of the project will be in the family law area. In addition, a website with instructions and forms has been developed and is being updated regularly. In the near future, instructions will be translated into Spanish.

Mr. Zapata's work will be guided by a 15-member Advisory Committee appointed by the Supreme Court and chaired by the Hon. David Holt of the Greene Superior Court. Questions about the project should be directed to Mr. Zapata at 317.234.1872 or azapata@courts.state.in.us.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 27 , 2001

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Judicial Commission Files Ethics Charges Against Judge Douglas Morton, Fulton Circuit Court

On September 27, 2001, the Indiana Commission on Judicial Qualifications filed formal disciplinary charges against Judge Douglas Morton of the Fulton Circuit Court. The Commission charged Judge Morton with violating the rule in the Code of Judicial Conduct against ex parte contacts, with violating the rule requiring judges to promptly report ex parte contacts, and with violating the rule which requires judges to disqualify from proceedings in which their impartiality might reasonably be questioned. The Charges result from a custody dispute entitled *Stonger v. Sorrell*, Cause No. 52D01-9205-DR-00112. The Commission alleges that Judge Morton discussed the merits of the case with lawyers for Dr. Stonger outside the presence of Ms. Sorrell's attorneys, then instituted a criminal investigation of a key witness, disclosed neither act to the lawyers for Ms. Sorrell until the events were discovered by Ms. Sorrell's attorneys, then denied their request that he disqualify himself from the proceeding. Judge Morton has twenty days within which to file an Answer to the Charges, after which the Supreme Court will appoint a panel of three judges to preside over an evidentiary hearing on the Commission's charges and its request that Judge Morton be disciplined by the Supreme Court for ethical misconduct.

[State of the Judiciary](#)

Supreme Court Imposes Ethics Sanction Against Judge James Funke, Jr., Jennings Superior Court

On September 27, 2001, the Indiana Supreme Court handed down an opinion In the Matter of James Funke, Jr., Judge of the Jennings Superior Court, Cause No. 40S00-0102-JD-136, in which it approved a settlement agreement between Judge Funke, his lawyer, Dan Byron, (317) 634-7588, and the Qualifications Commission. The Court ordered, as a sanction for ethical misconduct, that Judge Funke be suspended from judicial office without pay from October 20, 2001 through November 3, 2001. The Qualifications Commission had charged Judge Funke in January 2001 with various violations of the Code of Judicial Conduct resulting from action he took on behalf of pro se litigants in a local dispute with Jennings Northwest Regional Utilities. He also was charged with permitting a practice whereby the clerk of the court and her employees affixed Judge Funke's signature to protective orders as they were filed and before judicial scrutiny, which, in one instance, resulted in his signature appearing on a protective order filed by his own father.

Supreme Court Imposes Ethics Sanction Against Judge Frederick R. Spencer, Madison Circuit Court

On September 24, 2001, the Indiana Supreme Court issued an order In the Matter of Fredrick R. Spencer, Judge of the Madison Circuit Court, Cause No. 48S00-0102-JD-137, in which it approved a settlement agreement between Judge Spencer, his lawyer, Kevin McGoff, (317) 848-2300, and the Qualifications Commission, and ordered that Judge Spencer is Publicly Reprimanded by the Court. The Qualifications Commission had charged Judge Spencer in January 2001 with violating rules of ethics applicable to judicial candidates after Judge Spencer had run a television campaign advertisement in which he stated he had kept a promise to "send more child molesters to jail...burglars to jail...drug dealers to jail". In issuing the Public Reprimand, the Supreme Court accepted the agreement that Judge Spencer had violated a rule

prohibiting candidates from making pledges or promises of conduct in office, from making statements which commit or appear to commit candidates with respect to issues likely to come before the court, and which requires candidates to maintain the dignity appropriate to the judicial office and to act in a manner consistent with the independence of the judiciary.

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Chief Justice Shepard Responds to Tax Reform Proposal

[State of the Judiciary](#)

"The Indiana Supreme Court supports the O'Bannon-Kernan administration's proposal to transfer the financing of Indiana trial courts from county to state government," Indiana Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard said today. "We believe that it presents important opportunities both to improve the service courts provide the people of Indiana and to save taxpayers money."

Under the O'Bannon-Kernan administration's proposal, all property taxes used to support Indiana trial courts would be eliminated and responsibility for their financing would be assumed by the state.

Shepard said that nearly 1.5 million cases per year are filed in some 300 trial courts throughout the state of Indiana. The work of these courts in resolving these cases, administering probation, and other services and programs is currently financed and administered on a county-by-county basis. In 2000, counties spent approximately \$163 million on trial courts, approximately \$92 million of which was provided by property taxes and other local tax revenue. (The balance was provided by court fees and state property tax replacement credits.)

"The Indiana Judges Association has long supported transferring the financing of Indiana trial courts from county to state government," Shepard noted. "While there has been some progress in this regard, trial courts in Indiana are primarily funded by local property taxes. This means that some Hoosiers are denied prompt access to courts or court services simply because they live in a less affluent county that is unable to support its local courts at the same level as more wealthy ones. It also denies taxpayers the economies of scale that state-wide financing would produce."

Shepard said that in addition to making access to courts and court services more uniform throughout the state, funding trial courts at the state level would allow trial court procedures, services, and technology to be standardized much more easily when that is desirable. "This would create a more rational and effective justice system for our state," Shepard said.

The Court is assembling a committee of judges to assist in evaluating and advising the administration and legislature on these matters.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 19 , 2001

Contact: [David J. Remondini](#)

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Supreme Court to Hear Argument at Valparaiso University

The Indiana Supreme Court will hold oral argument on the Valparaiso University campus October 24, 2001, Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard announced today.

The argument will be from 11 a.m. to noon in the Stride Courtroom of Weseman Hall, School of Law. The argument is open to the public, but seating is limited to the first 60 people. All five Indiana Supreme Court Justices will be present for the oral argument.

The Justices will hear the case of Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District v. Chicago Southshore and South Bend Railroad. In the parties' dispute over the interpretation of a maintenance-of-way fee provision in agreement, the LaPorte Circuit Court confirmed an arbitration award in favor of Chicago Southshore. The Court of Appeals reversed and remanded that ruling and Chicago Southshore petitioned to transfer jurisdiction to the Indiana Supreme Court.

Following the oral argument, the Valparaiso University Alumni Association will present the Hon. Robert D. Rucker, a 1976 graduate, with an Alumni Achievement Award.

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October 23 , 2001

(317) 233-8684

Evansville Attorney Leslie Shively Named Law Examiner

Evansville attorney Leslie C. Shively has been appointed to the State Board of Law Examiners, Indiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard announced today.

Mr. Shively, an attorney for two decades, will begin a five-year term on December 1st with the 10-member Board of Law Examiners.

"I have known Mr. Shively for many years and I am certain that he will be a tremendous asset to the Board of Law Examiners. I am very grateful that he would make this substantial commitment to the profession. I truly appreciate his willingness to take on this considerable task in the midst of what I know is an active law practice," said Chief Justice Shepard.

Mr. Shively received his bachelor's, Masters, and law degrees from Indiana University. Through his firm, Shively & Associates, he assists communities and private development companies with the legal concerns of zoning, land use, adoption proceedings and regulatory challenges. He has written and lectured extensively on real estate issues.

Mr. Shively replaces Indiana University Law Prof. Patrick L. Baude of Bloomington, who has served on the Board of Law Examiners for ten years. Mr. Shively will be joining another Evansville attorney on the Board of Law Examiners, Sheila M. Corcoran, of the law firm Berger & Berger. This is the first time two Evansville attorneys have served on the Board at the same time.

The Board of Law Examiners is appointed by the Supreme Court and is primarily responsible for conducting the Indiana Bar Examination. It also is charged with making sure bar examination candidates have the requisite character and fitness to practice law in Indiana.

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Contact: [David J. Remondini \(317\) 233-8684](#)

October 26, 2001

or [Robert D. Rucker \(317\) 233-3665](#)

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Three Finalists Selected for Lake County Judgeship

Three finalists have been selected for the upcoming vacancy on the Lake County Superior Court, Indiana Supreme Court Justice Robert D. Rucker announced today.

Justice Rucker, who chairs the 9-member Lake County Judicial Nominating Commission, said interviews of 14 candidates were held on October 23rd and 24th in Lake County. The candidates are seeking to replace the Hon. James Richards, who is retiring after a distinguished tenure on the Lake County bench.

The candidates are Lake County Superior Court Juvenile Court Magistrate Glenn D. Commons, Lake Circuit Court Magistrate Christina J. Miller, and Lake County Superior Court Magistrate Robert A. Pete.

"It was difficult to narrow the field because many of the applicants were very well qualified. But I feel the Commission has selected three fine people. I am confident any of them would serve the people of Lake County with distinction," Justice Rucker said.

A former Gary resident, Justice Rucker was named chairman by Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard. By statute, the Chief Justice or a designee chairs the Commission.

Governor Frank L. O'Bannon has 60 days to select one person from the panel of three candidates.

In addition to Justice Rucker, the Lake County Judicial Nominating Commission is made up of four attorneys elected by their peers and four lay persons appointed by the Lake County Commissioners. The Commission deliberated in public before selecting the finalists.

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Indiana Courts Award LexisNexis Two-Year Contract

Indianapolis, IN, Nov. 1, 2001 - Indiana taxpayers will save over \$100,000 a year in research fees through a unique contract negotiated by the Indiana Supreme Court that will give thousands of government attorneys access to the latest legal information at a lower cost, Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard announced today.

The LexisNexis™ legal research information services will now be available, at the expense of the Indiana Supreme Court, to all trial court judicial officers of courts of record and circuit court clerks in the state of Indiana. The decision to provide LexisNexis services to Indiana trial courts on an exclusive basis for two years was based on LexisNexis ease of use, authoritative content, training, and extensive customer support network.

Supreme Court Justice Frank Sullivan, Jr., chair of the Court's Judicial Technology and Automation Committee (JTAC), said that the new relationship will ensure that all judicial officers in the state have access to the most current and complete legal information necessary when making their important decisions.

The \$240,000 agreement also allows government agencies, departments and municipalities throughout Indiana to use LexisNexis legal research information at the same low cost as the courts. According to Kurt Snyder, Director and Counsel of Trial Court Technology for the state of Indiana, the agreement marks a new way of doing business between state agencies and suppliers like LexisNexis.

Historically, "Government attorneys in the state would negotiate the best rate that they could for their respective agencies," said Snyder. Most agencies only have one or two attorneys on their staff. Under the new arrangement, the Supreme Court was able to take advantage of the large volume of trial court judges in the state and extend favorable pricing to all government employees in the state.

Although the Court does not possess comprehensive statistics on how much money Indiana taxpayers currently pay for these types of services, it is clear that the cost will be significantly less under this new plan. Considering the fact that the state of Indiana is experiencing revenue shortfalls, "this arrangement should be well received by tax payers throughout the state," Snyder said.

In addition to the price, the Supreme Court is also pleased with the wealth of information LexisNexis will make available to the judges in the state of Indiana. "LexisNexis clearly meets our legal research needs. It provides easy access via the Internet and comprehensive content that lets users spend more time analyzing information rather than searching for it," Sullivan said.

As many as 2,000 professionals - supreme court justices, judges, prosecutors, and government attorneys throughout the state - could use the legal research system.

• The LexisNexis family of online legal research products includes [lexis.com®](#), [Shepard's® Citation Service](#) and the [Matthew Bender treatise library](#).

About LexisNexis

LexisNexis Group is a leading global provider of information to corporate, government, legal and academic markets, and publishes legal, tax, regulatory and other information. The LexisNexis services combine searchable access to over three billion documents from thousands of sources with leading edge systems and tools for managing this content. LexisNexis delivers a high quality resource with which to build legal research and knowledge-management solutions for the entire enterprise, answering questions and solving problems. For more information, please visit www.lexisnexis.com.

About the Indiana Supreme Court Judicial Technology and Automation Committee (JTAC)

In order to develop a uniform policy on implementation of information technology by the Indiana judicial system, the Supreme Court of Indiana in 1999 established its Judicial Technology and Automation Committee (JTAC). The primary role of JTAC is to provide leadership and governance, including advisory oversight of state budget requests, regarding the use of technology in the courts in an effort to better serve the people of Indiana. For more information, please visit www.IN.gov/judiciary.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 16, 2001

Contact: Frances Hill

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Supreme Court Family Court Project Expands

In an expansion of the successful family court pilot project, the Indiana Supreme Court has selected five additional counties to be test sites for programs that help families with multiple legal issues navigate the court system, Chief Justice Shepard announced today.

The Indiana Supreme Court has selected courts in Boone, Montgomery, Marion, LaPorte, and Putnam counties to serve as pilot projects in the next phase of the Indiana Family Court Project, Chief Justice Shepard said. Each county was selected from among nine applicants, all of whom sought to develop innovative ways to deal with cases involving families and children.

"The growth of family court models in Indiana has been exciting and very encouraging. We look forward to working with the newest wave of ideas from pilot counties on ways to better serve children and families," said Chief Justice Shepard.

The Supreme Court and its Division of State Court Administration started the Family Court Project in 1999 with funding from the state legislature. Court of Appeals Judge Margret G. Robb chairs a statewide Family Court Task Force, which reviews applications for the project.

The family court concept focuses on reducing repeat court appearances and avoiding inconsistent judicial results for families and children in multiple legal proceedings. Under Indiana's traditional court system, a single family's various legal problems often are handled in different courts. Each judge may be unaware of other proceedings and may not have access to crucial information about the child and family.

During the first phase of the pilot projects, Johnson, Monroe, and Porter Counties successfully developed three unique but easily transferable ways to process family cases. These three family courts will continue to operate with limited state assistance as they move toward mostly local funding.

In Johnson County, Judge Mark Loyd and Magistrate Craig Lawson used an innovative one family-one judge model to transfer all of a family's legal cases before the same judicial officer. Local attorneys were overwhelming receptive to this new approach. Monroe County Judges Viola Taliaferro and Marc Kellams also used a one family-one judge approach, but additionally provided specialized programming for at-risk divorce families.

In Porter County, Judge Mary Harper developed a case management system to provide the same information to all the judicial officers involved with the family.

The family court projects also created some very innovative mediation programming to serve low income and indigent families, which allows families to resolve their cases outside of the courtroom using a neutral person to help them fashion a settlement. When the legal case involves the safety or permanency of the child, the Office of Family and Children, CASA, or schools may be involved in the out-of-court conferencing to insure the safety and stability of the children.

The five new pilot counties will build on the models created by the original pilot counties with

some exciting new ideas. Judge Steve David in Boone County and Judge Thomas Milligan in Montgomery County will combine their efforts in the first multiple county project. This project will include case coordination and information sharing between the two counties, as well as jointly developing and sharing needed services for children and families. Judge LaViolette in Putnam County anticipates branching into an adjacent county with an affordable mediation program, known as facilitation.

Judge Robert Gilmore and Magistrate Sally Ankony in LaPorte County will begin information sharing with the already existing family court in Porter County, and will develop case coordination for families involved in multiple courts and mediation programming in the juvenile court. In Marion County, Judges Robyn Moberly and S.K. Reid will work with Judge James Payne, of the Juvenile Division, to hire a case manager to expedite service delivery to at-risk families in divorce cases, as well as coordinate families who have juvenile, divorce, or criminal matters pending before multiple judges.

In 1999 the Supreme Court received \$400,000 for the first two-year period for the creation of pilot family courts. For the current budget cycle, 2001-2003, the court received an additional \$400,000 for funding, including \$235,000 for the new projects.

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December 17, 2001

(317) 233-8684

Court Historian Joins the Staff of the Supreme Court

Elizabeth R. Osborn has joined the staff of the Supreme Court as an Assistant to the Chief Justice for Court History and Public Education, Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard announced today.

Ms. Osborn will coordinate and initiate programs to help educate Indiana students, teachers, and citizens about the role of the Indiana judiciary and to preserve and promote the history of the Court. Current projects include the broadcast of all oral arguments before the Supreme Court ([Oral Arguments Online](#)) and the creation of court-related curriculum materials for classroom teachers ([Courts in the Classroom](#)), working with other agencies to promote the study of Indiana's constitution, a collaborative effort with Freetown Village to educate the public about the Court's role in the struggle against slavery, and organizing events to commemorate special moments in the Court's history.

"Having a full-time staff person to work with Indiana schools and citizens in bringing the role and the history of the Court into the public's eye has been a long-term goal that the Court is extremely happy to see come to pass," says Chief Justice Shepard. "Ms. Osborn's background in education, combined with her academic training in Indiana history and particularly its legal culture, provides the necessary expertise and experience to bring programs like Courts in the Classroom and Oral Arguments Online to life."

Ms. Osborn comes to the Court after serving as an Adjunct Professor of History at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis for the last 3 years. Ms. Osborn earned her bachelor's degree in education from the University of Connecticut. After several years teaching high school social studies in Hawaii, she relocated with her family to Indiana. She earned a master's degree in history from Indiana University-Bloomington and is presently completing her dissertation: "The Influence of Gender and Culture on Constitution-Making in Antebellum Indiana, Ohio, and Kentucky."

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December 19, 2001

(317) 233-8684

Board of Law Examiners "WebCasts" Admissions Ceremony

The Indiana State Board of Law Examiners became one of the first in the nation to produce a live "webcast" of an admissions ceremony for new lawyers, executive director Mary Place Godsey announced today.

By taking advantage of newly installed webcast equipment in the Courtroom of the Indiana Supreme Court, the Board of Law Examiners was able to send a video and audio signal of the swearing-in ceremony on December 18, 2001 out over the Internet. The Hon. Margret G. Robb of the Indiana Court of Appeals presided.

Tuesday's ceremony was held to admit the small group of attorneys who were unable to attend the main admissions ceremony held in the Indiana Convention Center on November 19th in Indianapolis.

The ceremony was broadcast live and then archived for later viewing. Staffers from the Board of Law Examiners had alerted the admittees to the webcast and several made arrangements for family members as far away Spain and Korea to watch it.

"Some of the admittees come from outside Indianapolis so the webcast gives any friends and family members who were unable to make the trip here the chance to see the ceremony," Mrs. Godsey said.

The Supreme Court had the equipment installed to webcast its oral arguments as part of an outreach and education campaign that includes a "Courts in the Classroom" component that is designed to teach high school students about the legal system.

The ceremony can be viewed at: www.IN.gov/judiciary/attorneys/admissions.html

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