



## News Release

FROM: Chambers of the Chief Judge  
19th Judicial Circuit  
Lake County  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Waukegan, Illinois

### CHIEF JUDGE PHILLIPS RECEIVES JUDICIAL ICON AWARD

Judge John T. Phillips, Chief Judge of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, was recognized recently as one of three recipients who received a “Judicial Icon” award from the Illinois Judges Foundation. In very good company, the two other recipients included Honorable Diane P. Wood, Chief Judge of the 7<sup>th</sup> Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals, and Illinois Supreme Court Justice Mary Jane Theis.

Judge Jeanne Reynolds bestowed the award on behalf of the Foundation. She cited Judge Phillips’ commitment to service and restorative justice as the reason for his selection.

Judge Phillips was the first judge to volunteer for a project called the “One Book, One Judge, One Goal,” taking time from his busy schedule as Lake County’s leading judge to read to primary school children. He also recruited other judges to follow suit and remains enthusiastic about the activity. “The teachers love the program, the students look forward to having a judge read to them, and the judges are thrilled to see the excitement on all their faces,” commented Judge Phillips. “Hopefully, we have made a good and lasting impression on them and have helped create a continuing interest in reading.” In addition to the judges’ individual awards, 500 books will be donated by the Foundation to primary grade students in the name of each honoree.

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Judge Reynolds also spoke about Judge Phillips' leadership role and deep commitment to treatment courts in Lake County and throughout the State. She said, "Judge John Phillips has faithfully served in every division of the 19<sup>th</sup> Circuit, but perhaps he found his true passion as he took the lead as the Chair of the Multi-Disciplinary Steering Committee that created and established the Specialty Courts for drug treatment, mental health and veterans' assistance. There is no way to quantify the number of lives improved and saved by his efforts."

When the award was presented, Judge Phillips thanked the Foundation and quipped, "When I heard I was being recognized with the likes of distinguished judges such as Judge Wood and Justice Theis, I thought it was akin to a concert tour where Beyoncé and Rihanna are joined on stage by Kermit the Frog."

Originally appointed as an Associate Judge, Judge Phillips was elected as Circuit Judge in November 2006. In 2013, he was unanimously elected as Chief Judge by his peers and re-elected in 2014 to serve as Chief Judge until January 2016. Judge Phillips has been on the bench for over 22 years.

About 150 Illinois Judges Foundation members and guests attended the event at The Chicago Bar Association headquarters in Chicago.

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[www.19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us](http://www.19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us)



Picture included, left to right:  
Hon. John T. Phillips, Chief Judge, 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit  
Hon. Diane P. Wood, Chief Judge of the 7<sup>th</sup> Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals  
Hon. Mary Jane Theis, Illinois Supreme Court Justice  
Hon. Jeanne Reynolds, Associate Judge, Cook County Circuit Court