



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Waukegan, Illinois

CHIEF JUDGE BOORAS HONORED WITH JUDICIAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

The Honorable James K. Booras, Chief Judge of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit, was recently honored by the Hellenic Bar Association with its "Judicial Excellence Award." The award was presented at the Bar Association's Fifty-eighth Annual Installation Dinner Dance and Scholarship Ball held at the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place in Chicago.

Booras was described as "a star of the Greek-American legal community" and "an inspiration." Born in Nestani-Tripolis, Greece, Judge Booras came to the United States in 1970, after graduating high school. Although he knew only a few phrases in English at the time, Booras went on to earn his Bachelor of Science from Northern Illinois University and then his law degree from Lewis University College of Law, now Northern Illinois University College of Law. He is said to have worked twice as hard as his peers to make up for the language barrier.

After a brief time in private practice, Judge Booras served for many years in the State's Attorney's Office, rising through the ranks to eventually supervise the Drug Prosecutions Division. He was head of that division when he was appointed Associate Judge in 1991. In August 2002, he was appointed Circuit Judge by the Illinois Supreme Court. He was successfully elected to that position in the 2002 general election and successfully ran for retention in 2008. In May 2008, Booras was appointed Chief Judge by unanimous vote of his fellow Circuit Judges. He was recently reappointed – again by unanimous vote – in November 2008.

Judge Booras was introduced by the Honorable Peggy Chiampas, a Cook County Associate Judge and Hellenic Bar Association Board member. Chiampas called Booras' appointment to the position of Chief Judge "a tremendous achievement." It is an honor for the Greek-American community to have a Judge of Greek descent attain such a position," she said. "Judge Booras has been a mentor and an example to Greek-American youth in the Chicago Metropolitan area."

Judge Booras' previous honors include being presented with the "Ben Ori Award" by the Lake County Bar Association in June 2002, and the "Distinguished Service Award" by Northern Illinois University College of Law in 2005.

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