



News Release

FROM: Chambers of the Chief Judge
19th Judicial Circuit
Lake County
Waukegan, Illinois 60085-4359

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Waukegan, Illinois

PROBATION OFFICER RECIPIENT OF SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

Christine Hecker, a Lake County principal probation officer, recently received notification that she is being recognized for her work on the development and administration of a program known as "Failure To Appear" (FTA) in probation's Pretrial Services Unit. The FTA program began as an attempt to locate defendants who had missed their court dates scheduled with the 19th Judicial Circuit Court.

Currently, there are over 18,000 active warrants in Lake County with approximately 30 new warrants added daily. It is estimated that 90% of the warrants are fail to appear warrants.

The FTA program, which started in 2007, is an added function of Pretrial Services that promotes community and individual safety and the defendant's return to court. Ms. Hecker, who works closely with deputies of the Lake County Sheriff's Warrants Division, said, "it is truly a joint effort with the Lake County Sheriff's Office."

Ms. Hecker will be presented with the James B. Droege Memorial Scholarship Award at the upcoming conference in September. She is one of four recipients of this award throughout the U.S. and represents the Central Region. The scholarship will pay for her air, hotel and training expenses associated with the conference. Jim Droege was a former Director of the Indianapolis Bail Project who oversaw the development of pretrial services in Marion County, Indiana. The awards ceremony will take place during the National Association of Pretrial Services Agencies conference being held in Charlotte, North Carolina, September 13-16, 2009.

Christine Hecker is a magna cum laude graduate of Northeastern Illinois University. She began her employment with the 19th Judicial Circuit in March 1997. She and her husband Josh, a Kenosha gang unit officer, and family reside in Lake County.

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