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

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Waukegan, Illinois

## **JUDGES OF THE NINETEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT VISITED 14 SCHOOLS AS PART OF THE ILLINOIS JUDGES ASSOCIATION READING PROJECT**

The [Illinois Judges Association's](#) (IJA) "Page It Forward" program is intended for children in grades K-4 to encourage reading appreciation, value, and enjoyment. This program was initiated by one of the 19th Judicial Circuit's very own, now a Justice in the Second District Appellate Court and former president of the Illinois Judges Association, the Honorable Mary S. Schostok.

Justice Schostok said, "This reading deficiency affects student learning and contributes to the high school dropout rate. Our reading project is one small step which we hope will inspire young students to appreciate the value of books as they learn a little about history and our system of justice directly from a sitting judge."

Twenty-one 19th Judicial Circuit Judges made classroom appearances, dressed in black robes, to read books to the students and donate various items to the schools. Judges visited 25 classrooms and engaged a total of 610 students. Twenty gavels were also donated thanks to the Illinois Judges Foundation and the Illinois Judges Association. Additionally, 624 coloring and activity books were donated, courtesy of the 19th Judicial Circuit.

Most importantly, students and school libraries received 257 books donated through funding from the Illinois Judges Foundation, specifically:

- 45 copies of "Malala: A Hero for All"
- 100 copies of "Abe Lincoln's Hat"
- 21 copies of "Escape North! The Story of Harriet Tubman"
- 23 copies of "George Washington's Dog"
- 68 copies of "Who is Ketanji Brown Jackson"

The IJA's "Page It Forward" reading and tutoring program is just one of a series of community programs undertaken by the Illinois Judges Association. Other IJA programs include: "Courtroom in the Classroom," a presentation that celebrates the U.S. Constitution; "7 Reasons to Leave the Party," addressing the legal and personal consequences of drinking and driving, taking drugs, and engaging in other unhealthy behaviors; "Worries of the World Wide Web", a program created to address the increasing problem of cyberbullying, electronic harassment, and sexting/pornography; and "Your Future, Your Choice," educating students about the justice system, how a case goes through the system, the difference between the juvenile and the adult system, and crimes associated with the internet and social media. Information on these programs can be found on the [IJA website](#).

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