

PRESS RELEASE

Office of the Chief Judge
Madison County Courthouse
Edwardsville, IL 62025

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For immediate release:

PRO BONO WEEK CELEBRATION AND RECOGNITION OF VOLUNTEER ATTORNEYS PLANNED

The Third Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee will recognize the Tenth Annual National Celebration of Pro Bono Week and celebrate the Madison County attorneys who have provided free legal advice, free legal education, and handled mediations and other court appointments without charge through the court's programs. Pro Bono week is October 21-27, 2018, and a recognition luncheon will be held at the LeClaire Room in Edwardsville on Tuesday, October 23rd beginning at 11:45 a.m. Chief Justice Lloyd Karmeier of the Illinois Supreme Court is expected to welcome the attendees. The featured speaker is Judge Julie Katz, Chair of the 20th Circuit Pro Bono Committee which is the newest circuit-wide pro bono committee in Illinois. In addition, Chief Judge David Hylla will present the annual pro bono awards during the luncheon. The luncheon is open to attorneys, court staff, and to the press.

"Residents of Madison County have an opportunity to speak to an attorney and find out what the law says and what to expect in court proceedings in our legal advice clinic thanks to the generosity of the lawyers in this circuit who donate their time to help," noted Chief Judge David Hylla. He added that "the attorneys give self-represented litigants information to make the court process easier to understand and are also appreciated by the entire court system."

This year's award recipients are Leonard Berg and Ted Gianaris. Leonard Berg has been providing pro bono services to individual recipients in addition to assisting other attorneys to do pro bono for elderly clients. Mr. Berg has been active reviewing legislation with the legislative committee of the Illinois Chapter of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys and with Public Policy Committee of the Special Needs Alliance. Ted Gianaris of Simmons Hanly Conroy has been a driving force in establishing the "Second Chance" expungement program for the past three years and also takes pro bono defense cases in Illinois and Missouri. Both recipients have provided countless hours of help for individuals with limited incomes.

The recognition luncheon is sponsored by the law firms of Lewis Rice, LLC; Gori Julian and Associates, PC; Simmons Hanly Conroy LLC; the Illinois Bar Foundation; the Madison

County Bar Association; the Public Interest Law Initiative(PILI); and Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation.

Attorneys from Madison County continue to provide free appointments in the Legal Advice Center in the Madison County courthouse on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. Other lawyers accept appointments as mediators and guardian-ad-litem in the family division where the parties are of limited income. The Pro Bono committee also provides free continuing legal education to all the attorneys who are doing volunteer work to enable them to answer questions. The committee appreciates both the lawyers doing the pro bono work and the lawyers donating their time to train others.

The Third Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee reminds members of the public that free legal appointments to low income members of the public who do not have attorneys are available by appointment on any legal subject except criminal law, including but not limited to subjects such as family law or areas such as debt collection, landlord tenant, small claims, or any other civil area of law. Those free appointments are held the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. All appointments are for those of limited incomes who do not have attorneys and qualifying information will need to be provided. To make an appointment or to volunteer, contact Lauren Jansen at ljansen@co.madison.il.us or call 618-296-4472.

In addition to the appointments, the Law Library houses the Self-Help Center where staff will assist people who do not have attorneys in finding forms to file pleadings and other services. It is open on the lower level of the courthouse at 155 N. Main Street, Edwardsville, from 8:30 a.m. to noon and from 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. on Monday through Friday when the courthouse is open.