

MEDIA ADVISORY



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Indiana Judge Gregory J. Donat to Receive Access to Justice Award

Des Moines, Iowa – Judge Gregory J. Donat of the Tippecanoe Superior Court in Lafayette, Indiana has been named the 2010 recipient of the American Judicature Society’s Kathleen M. Sampson Access to Justice Award. The award recognizes Judge Donat’s leadership of efforts to improve access to justice for all people. He will receive the award at a statewide Indiana judicial conference later this month.

Monica Fennell, Executive Director of the Indiana Pro Bono Commission, nominated Donat for the award, citing his work “to ensure that pro bono and pro se efforts are integrated and that all stakeholders in the access to justice community work together to better provide legal help for the poor.” Fennell noted that “he ensures that victims’ rights and self-represented litigant issues are not overlooked whenever he is involved.”

Jane Seigel, Executive Director of the Indiana Judicial Center, remarked that “Judge Donat has been a leader in the State of Indiana as he has creatively tried to develop resources for self-represented litigants—ensuring them their day in court.”

In addition to his work in Indiana, Donat has led and contributed to national projects to enhance access to justice through specialized courts. Anne Seymour, National Crime Victim Advocate, praised Donat’s work to “provide quality services to victims and survivors of crime” through domestic violence courts and drug courts, noting that “whenever we need a judge who truly sees the importance of balancing the rights of those accused and convicted of crimes, with the [rights] of victims of such crimes, we call upon Judge Donat for his wisdom, expertise and fairness.”

The Kathleen M. Sampson Access to Justice Award is named after the long-time AJS Senior Program Associate and pioneer in the field of improving court services for self-represented litigants. The award is given to individuals or organizations that make extraordinary contributions to ensuring access to justice for all.

Founded in 1913, the American Judicature Society’s mission is to secure and promote an independent and qualified judiciary and a fair system of justice. AJS carries out its mission through empirical research, publications, and educational programs focusing on access to justice, criminal justice system reforms, judicial selection, judicial ethics, the jury, judicial independence, and public understanding of the justice system. For more information, visit www.ajs.org.

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