

NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 22, 2008

Contact:
American Judicature Society
Beth Tigges
(515) 271-2283
btigges@ajs.org

Tenth Circuit Judge to Receive National Devitt Award

Des Moines, Iowa – Deanell Reece Tacha, Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit, has been selected as the recipient of the 26th Annual Edward J. Devitt Distinguished Service to Justice Award. Tacha was chosen by a three-member panel chaired by U.S. Supreme Court Justice Samuel A. Alito, Jr.; other members of the panel are Chief Judge Anthony J. Scirica, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit; and Judge Mark R. Kravitz, U.S. District Judge, District of Connecticut.

In making the announcement, Justice Alito said, “It is with great pride that I announce the selection of Chief Judge Deanell Tacha as the recipient of the 26th Annual Edward J. Devitt Distinguished Service to Justice Award. Judge Tacha, through her many contributions to the federal judiciary and the bar, not only meets but exceeds the standards established by this Award. These invaluable contributions have brought, and continue to bring, great honor to our profession. Judge Tacha is a most exceptional woman whose selection brings heightened esteem to this Award.”

Drawing from over 70 letters of support, Judge John W. Lungstrum, U.S. District Court for the District of Kansas, in his nomination letter explained: “...there is no criterion by which a nominee could be evaluated concerning which Judge Tacha does not excel: ‘Sparkling intellect,’ ‘excellent jurist,’ ‘spectacular’ chief judge, ‘wise’ decision maker, ‘go-to’ public servant, inspirational mentor, and role model. It is fair to say few other judges have ever served in such a wide range of leadership positions in our profession. If there has been a call to service, Judge Tacha has always answered it.”

President Reagan appointed Judge Tacha to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit in 1985. She served as Chief Judge of the Circuit from 2001-2007. Prior to her appointment to the bench, Judge Tacha engaged in private practice in Kansas, served on the faculty at the University of Kansas School of Law and was Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at the university. Judge Tacha chaired the Judicial Division of the American Bar Association and the U.S. Judicial Conference Committee on the Judicial Branch. She has also been a member of the U.S. Sentencing Commission and President of the American Inns of the Court Foundation.

The Devitt Award is named for the late Edward J. Devitt, longtime chief judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota. The annual award honors Article III judges whose careers have been exemplary, measured by their contributions to the

administration of justice, the advancement of the rule of law, and the improvement of society as a whole. It is administered by the American Judicature Society with funding provided by the Dwight D. Opperman Foundation, Minneapolis. The honor includes a \$15,000 honorarium and is symbolized by an inscribed crystal obelisk. The award will be presented at a ceremony this fall.

###