

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT



Office of Public Information

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW ACCESS TO JUSTICE EXHIBIT TO BE UNVEILED AT MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT LEARNING CENTER ON SEPT. 15; MAY BE FIRST SUCH COURT DISPLAY

LANSING, MI, September 14, 2010 – An exhibit aimed at getting students to consider the impact of race, gender, and other factors on access to the legal system will be unveiled on September 15 during a ceremony at the [Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center](#).

Featured speakers will include Chief Justice Marilyn Kelly and Justice Alton T. Davis. Kelly announced today that she has appointed Davis to serve as the Learning Center's supervising justice.

Entitled "Can you balance the Scales of Justice?", the interactive exhibit is funded by a grant from the Michigan State Bar Foundation, using IOLTA (interest on lawyers' trust accounts) funds. The exhibit is believed to be the first of its kind in the country, said Kelly.

"The message of 'Scales of Justice' is that the justice system works best when it is fair, accessible, and accountable to everyone, including those who, due to race, ethnic origin, gender, poverty, or other factors, have encountered barriers to the legal process," Kelly said.

Davis added that the exhibit "goes beyond identifying problems that various groups have had with access to justice. It also asks students to think critically about how we address those problems."

The exhibit is the work of a committee that was co-chaired by Learning Center Coordinator Rachael L. Drenovsky and Lorraine H. Weber, the Supreme Court's Director of Access and Fairness. Committee members included Learning Center Docent Candy Chatfield; 24th District Court Chief Judge John T. Courtright; Ingham County Probate Judge Richard J. Garcia; Dr. Timothy H. Little, Professor Emeritus of Michigan State University's College of Education; Dearborn attorney Antonio Ruiz of the law firm of Saba Ruiz P.L.C.; former Michigan Supreme Court Justice Elizabeth A. Weaver; and Dionnie Wynter, Assistant Director, Center for Ethics, Service, and Professionalism, Thomas M. Cooley School of Law. The exhibit was created by LifeFormations, an art and technology studio whose clients include the Museum of African American History, the Walt Disney Company, and Universal Studios.

The ceremony begins at 1:45 p.m. in the Supreme Court's courtroom on the sixth floor of the Michigan Hall of Justice in Lansing. The justices and other participants will then move to the Learning Center for a tour of the exhibit, joined by students from City School in Grand Blanc

and St. Mark Christian Academy in Troy. The event concludes with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and discussion of the exhibit.

For more information about the exhibit, or to schedule a tour with the Learning Center, call 517-373-7171 or e-mail Rachael L. Drenovsky at drenovskyr@courts.mi.gov.

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