

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT



Office of Public Information

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JULY IS JUROR APPRECIATION MONTH; COURTS ACROSS STATE TO HONOR JURORS FOR THEIR SERVICE

Lansing, MI, June 23, 2008 – Juror’s contributions to the justice system will be the focus of “Juror Appreciation Month” in July, as the Michigan Supreme Court and courts across the state thank citizens for serving the courts – and their fellow citizens – as jurors.

The Court chose July, the month in which Americans celebrate independence, to honor jurors for sustaining the robust history of one of our nation’s fundamental civil liberties – the right to trial by jury.

In a resolution proclaiming July as Juror Appreciation Month, the Court said that “Our courts deeply value the contributions of tens of thousands of citizens who annually give their time and talents to serve the justice system, and their fellow citizens, as jurors.”

Chief Justice Clifford W. Taylor observed that “When citizens receive their summons for jury duty, they become part of a long and rich history of a legal practice dating to a time even before the United States became a country. British common law provided the blueprint for trial by jury that has continued more than 200 years later in courts across the United States, and the U.S. has ensured that the right to a jury trial would be a fundamental civil liberty by enshrining it as part of the Constitution.”

A DVD about jury service, produced by Eaton County judges and court staff, is available to participating courts throughout Michigan. Two 60-second public service announcements are also available, one recorded by Michigan Supreme Court Chief Justice Clifford W. Taylor and a second recorded by Corey Berkowitz, a Bloomfield Hills Andover High School graduating senior and WBFH 88.1 FM radio student. Both are aimed at improving the jury experience by helping the public understand the value and requirements of jury service. The Juror Appreciation Public Service Announcements can be accessed at <http://www.courts.michigan.gov/supremecourt/Press/SpecialFeaturesIndex.htm>.

Another way to learn more about jury service is to visit the Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center web site. Visitors can play a game to test their knowledge about what every juror should know. Sample questions include: Must a jury reach a unanimous verdict? Do all jurors have to agree on the verdict? How many persons are on a jury?

Find the answers at <http://www.courts.michigan.gov/lc-gallery/jury.htm> or visit the Learning Center, located on the first floor of the Hall of Justice at 925 West Ottawa Street, Lansing, at the corner of Allegan Street and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. Walk-in visitors are welcome. Docent-led tours are available for groups of eight or more. For reservations, call (517) 373-7229.

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