

## **Judge Duncan Beagle: Creating Level Playing Fields**

“I’ve got a passion for the underdogs in life and a deep love for children.”

It’s not hard to imagine that Genesee Circuit Court Judge Duncan Beagle is equally comfortable in black-and-white stripes as he is in a black robe—only in different types of court.

The former basketball player, coach, and referee is still an avid sports fan, and as a native son of Flint, he is also dedicated to finding ways to apply this passion to efforts that benefit local kids.

After being appointed to the bench in 1991, Judge Beagle has developed and presides over several court programs geared toward helping at-risk kids: Attendance Court, for truant students; Family Dependency Drug Court, for parents struggling with addiction; and ADAPT Court, to improve the efficiency of paternity cases.

Outside of the courtroom, Judge Beagle works to give local kids a leg up in many ways, including his longtime work with Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Genesee County. At one time, he boasted six official little brothers through the program and several unofficial little brothers and was extremely active with them through organized sports, in particular.

“When you get to change the system and change a kid’s life, that’s the real reward,” Judge Beagle shared.

He eventually served as board president and was named “Big Brother of the Year.”

In addition, Judge Beagle is very proud of his work as chairperson of the Atwood Stadium Authority, which helped to preserve a historic local stadium before it was turned over to Kettering University in 2014.

With a background in Flint’s long tradition of athletics, Judge Beagle—himself inducted into the Greater Flint Area Sports Hall of Fame—says it was an honor to be able to give the city and community back this “living monument” representing so many of their accomplishments.

Starting in 2017, Judge Beagle has organized the Vehicle City Gridiron Classic with three high school football games played at Atwood Stadium on the first day of the season. The event is a draw for new visitors to the city and involves Kettering and local school districts alike.

"I like to work with people, help people, and solve problems," he remarked.

Having been confined to a wheelchair since an illness struck him in 1991, Judge Beagle has not let that slow him down at all. He has given his time and energy to many additional local organizations during his career: Voices for Children Advocacy Center; Police Athletic League; Genesee County Disability Network; and Flint Rotary Club, to name a few. Also, he served on the State Commission for Disability Concerns.

In 2016, Judge Beagle received the Michigan Supreme Court Daniel J. Wright Lifetime Achievement Award for his work in keeping families together.

On why he continues to do what he does, both in and out of the courtroom?

Judge Beagle employs one of his favorite sayings: "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."