BY THE NUMBERS: THE MICHIGAN COURT OF APPEALS AT 50 YEARS

- A caseload of 365 cases transferred from the Michigan Supreme Court greeted the 9 new Judges and 45 employees of the Court of Appeals at its opening on January 12, 1965. By the end of that year, the Court had received 1,235 case filings. Filings increased steadily each year to a high of 13,352 cases in 1992. As of its 50th anniversary, over 325,000 cases have been filed with the Court of Appeals.

- The Judges of the Court of Appeals have issued over 151,700 dispositive opinions in the Court’s first 50 years. Of those, over 28,300 are published opinions reported in the 306 volumes of the Michigan Appeals Reports.

- 82 Judges have served on the Court of Appeals bench; 41 reached the Court of Appeals initially by election and 41 were by appointment of the Governor. 13 Judges have gone on to serve on the Michigan Supreme Court and 3 others were subsequently appointed to the federal bench.

- The 1st female member of the Court of Appeals bench was former-Justice Dorothy Comstock Riley; she was appointed by Governor William G. Milliken in 1976. Since Justice Riley’s appointment, 19 more women have been elected or appointed to the Court.

- 28 years by current Judge David H. Sawyer represents the longest term of service as a Judge of the Court of Appeals. The shortest term was 1.5 years by Judge John D. Watts, an original member of the Court who died in office in June 1966.

- 3 employees have served the Court of Appeals for more than 40 years. Elizabeth Pyzik was the last of the Court’s original employees when she retired in 2009 after nearly 41 years with the Court. In 2015, current employees Annie Madigan and Barbara Buckley will achieve 41 and 40 years of service respectively.

- The Court of Appeals centralized research staff was a 1st of its kind when Chief Judge T. John Lesinski introduced it in 1968, possibly his most lasting legacy to the Court. Since its inception, well over 1,000 young attorneys have started their careers with the Court and have gone on to distinguished careers as practitioners, judges, justices, and court administrators, making a remarkable impact on Michigan jurisprudence.

- Since the Court of Appeals implemented its voluntary electronic filing (e-filing) system in 2006, over 206,000 documents in roughly 17,500 cases have been electronically filed. E-filings have increased exponentially over the years, from roughly 1,000 filings per year to over 50,000 filings in recent years. In January 2015, the Court will take the next step in this technological evolution, partnering with the Michigan Supreme Court in the adoption of a new e-filing solution for both Courts developed by ImageSoft Inc. of Southfield.

- In 2010, the Court of Appeals began to accept electronic case records from lower courts. Initially filed on compact discs, the e-records are now received by electronic file transfer directly into Court servers. In the first 4 years the Court has received over 1,700 electronic case records from several circuit courts, 1,300 from Oakland Circuit Court alone. Other courts that regularly provide e-records are Macomb, Grand Traverse, and Alpena Circuit Courts.