



MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chief Justice McCormack Serves as Visiting Judge in Van Buren County

“Have Gavel, Will Travel” visit also spotlights local drug court graduates, Recovery Month

PAW PAW, MI, September 9, 2019 – Continuing the new Michigan Supreme Court “Have Gavel, Will Travel” initiative, Chief Justice Bridget M. McCormack Friday joined Van Buren County Circuit Court Chief Judge Kathleen M. Brickley to hear cases on the Drug Treatment Court docket. In an effort to increase engagement and build ties between courts and the community, several Justices are serving as visiting judges on district, circuit, and probate courts statewide, hearing and deciding real cases.

“The doors to an independent and efficient judiciary must be wide open to everyone.” said Chief Justice McCormack. “By engaging with local communities, we build trust in our judiciary and deliver on the promise of a fair and consistent court system that treats every person with dignity and respect. Chief Judge Brickley understands that living up to that commitment is our top priority.”

“The Van Buren Courts are proud to be partnering with the Michigan Supreme Court in the ‘Have Gavel, Will Travel’ initiative. Having Chief Justice McCormack join me on the bench sends a signal to the entire community that our court is committed to being independent, accessible, engaged, and efficient,” said Chief Judge Brickley.

Chief Justice McCormack also noted that September is National Recovery Month, and highlighted the successful efforts of the county’s wide range of treatment courts. “With one in ten Michiganders in recovery, the problem-solving courts here in Van Buren County are playing a critical role in saving lives, strengthening families, and making communities safer.”

Chief Justice McCormack, Justice Elizabeth T. Clement, and Justice Megan K. Cavanagh each are visiting three courts around Michigan to launch “Have Gavel, Will Travel.” In each instance, the Justices are sitting with a local judge, and hear and decide cases on their own as a visiting judge over two days.

In addition to the benefits of engaging the local community and court system, the experience will be invaluable to helping the Justices understand the day-to-day concerns judges see in their courtrooms, and to appreciate the critical work that is being done in courtrooms from Wayne County to Kent County to Marquette.

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