



MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Supreme Court Justices, Tribal State Federal Judicial Forum Honor Peacemaker Patrick Wilson

LANSING, MI, January 16, 2019 – Members of the Michigan Tribal State Federal Judicial Forum (“Forum”), including Michigan Supreme Court Chief Justice Bridget M. McCormack, convened today at the Michigan Hall of Justice in Lansing to honor Peacemaker Patrick D. Wilson, of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians Tribal Court. Chief Justice McCormack was joined by Justice Megan K. Cavanagh, the Court’s new liaison on tribal issues, and her father, retired Justice Michael F. Cavanagh, in presenting Wilson with a resolution from the Supreme Court for his instrumental work on the Forum and his assistance in starting the Washtenaw County Peacemaking Court—the first state court of its kind in Michigan.

“The work of the Forum is important to all Michigan citizens because it affects how our court systems best serve Michiganders, and the peacemaking process is an essential part of this work,” said Chief Justice McCormack. “Peacemaker Wilson is truly a visionary, and I applaud him for helping to bring this approach to justice to the state level.”

Forum members in attendance included Judge Timothy Connors, of Washtenaw County Circuit and Peacemaking Courts; Peacemaker Margaret Connors, Washtenaw County Peacemaking Court; William Petoskey, Washtenaw County Peacemaking Court; and Chief Judge Jeffrey Nellis, Mason County Circuit Court.

Representing the Little River Band were Tribal Ogema (or “Chief”) Larry Romanelli, Tribal Court Chief Judge Daniel Bailey, Associate Judge Angela Sherigan, Peacemaker Martha Howell, Court Administrator Deborah Miller, and Court Clerk Laurie Willis.

Peacemaking is a traditional Native American approach to problem solving that focuses on healing and restoring relationships between parties in disagreement. It aims to improve the traditional courtroom experience in a process whereby everyone is part of a comprehensive solution. Parties meet in a circle with trained peacemakers. Learn more about Washtenaw County Peacemaking Court [here](#).

Retired Justice Michael Cavanagh cofounded the Michigan Tribal State Federal Judicial Forum with Tribal Judge Michael Petoskey, of the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, in 2014 to provide an ongoing venue for judges from all three jurisdictions to convene jointly to improve working relations and communication. It is comprised of judges representing each of Michigan’s 12 federally-recognized tribes, 12 state court judges, and federal judges and officials. Read more about the Forum [here](#).