

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT



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Robert P. Young, Jr., elected to second term as chief justice

LANSING, MI, January 2, 2013 – The justices of the Michigan Supreme Court have unanimously elected Robert P. Young, Jr. to a second term as chief justice, the court announced today. The justices choose a chief justice at the beginning of every odd-numbered year.

Young pledged to continue court reforms aimed at improving public service and transparency. “The State Court Administrative Office has already started working with the trial courts to become more effective through performance measurement,” the chief justice noted.

“Performance measurement has been used in the private sector for years, and it can be just as effective in the public sector,” Young explained. “We look at factors that affect the public’s experience of the courts – access and fairness, timeliness, cost-effectiveness, and others – and find ways to measure the courts’ performance on each. Those measurements in turn provide very valuable information about how well the courts are functioning and where they can improve.”

Young continued, “It may seem counter-intuitive to say that we can apply measurements to the quality of justice, but in fact it can be done, in no small part by focusing on the public’s experience. For example, to assess ‘access and fairness,’ courts could ask litigants to answer questions about their experience, including ‘Did the judge hear your side of the story? When you left the courtroom, did you know what to do next? Did court staff answer your questions?’”

Starting this year, SCAO will begin posting performance measures online, making that information available to the public, Young said. More information about the plan is available at <http://www.courts.mi.gov/Administration/admin/op/Pages/Performance-Measures.aspx>.

A Detroit native, Young earned both undergraduate and law degrees from Harvard University. He began his legal career in 1978 with the law firm of Dickinson, Wright, Moon, Van Dusen, & Freeman. In 1992, he joined AAA Michigan as its vice-president, corporate secretary and general counsel.

Governor John Engler appointed Young to the Michigan Court of Appeals in 1995, followed by Young’s election to that court in 1996. In 1999, Engler appointed Young to the Michigan Supreme Court, to which Young was elected in 2002 and re-elected in 2010.

Young served as an adjunct professor at Wayne State University Law School for a number of years. He is the author of “Active Liberty and the Problem of Judicial Oligarchy,” in *The Supreme Court and the Idea of Constitutionalism* (Kautz, Melzer, Weinberger & Zinman, Eds.,

University of Pennsylvania Press 2009). He is a co-editor of *Michigan Civil Procedure During Trial, 2d Ed.* (Michigan Institute of Continuing Legal Education, 1989) and *Michigan Civil Procedure* (Michigan Institute of Continuing Legal Education, 1999). Michigan State University and Central Michigan University have awarded him honorary degrees.

Young has served on the boards of many charitable business and civic organizations, including United Community Services of Metropolitan Detroit and Vista Maria, a resource center for disadvantaged young women and girls. He has also served as a trustee of the Detroit Institute of Children, The Detroit Historical Society, and the Governor's Task Force on Children's Justice Concerning Child Abuse and Neglect. A former commissioner of the Michigan Civil Service Commission, Young was a trustee of Central Michigan University, University Liggett School, and the Grosse Pointe Academy. He is a former chair of the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce "Leadership Detroit" program.

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