



# MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

*John Nevin, Communications Director*

Ph: 517-373-0129 Twitter: @MISupremeCourt FB: facebook.com/misupremecourt

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Nominations sought for Daniel J. Wright Lifetime Achievement Award; honor recognizes outstanding work in support of Michigan families, children**

LANSING, MI, October 2, 2020 – Nominations are now open for the Daniel J. Wright Lifetime Achievement Award to honor exceptional service to Michigan’s children. Sponsored by the Michigan Supreme Court and Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, the award is presented each year in conjunction with efforts to encourage and celebrate adoption. As part of its November Adoption Month initiative, the Supreme Court is urging courts statewide to raise awareness of the need for loving parents to adopt children from foster care.

The award was established in honor of the late Daniel J. Wright of Grand Ledge, a longtime leader in child support and child welfare reform. He was credited with the “Michigan Miracle” in 2002 when, as special assistant to then-Chief Justice Maura D. Corrigan, he led the state’s efforts to upgrade Michigan’s child support enforcement system by federally-mandated deadlines.

By meeting the deadlines, Wright saved the state \$142 million in federal fines and earned the state a \$36 million refund for fines it had already paid. Later, as director of the Friend of the Court Bureau and Child Welfare Services divisions of the State Court Administrative Office, Wright helped create the state’s “Adoption Forums” to deal with adoption barriers that were stranding children in foster care.

“Wright’s legacy and devotion to give foster children a greater voice in decisions affecting their own lives, continue to make a difference in the lives of children and inspired the Court in our work,” said Chief Justice Bridget McCormack. “Connecting foster children with safe and nurturing ‘forever’ families is a goal shared by everyone in our justice system.”

Nominations are open to attorneys, judges, caseworkers, court staff, employees of public and private agencies, employees and members of nonprofits, and others who have a significant record of helping Michigan families and children. To be eligible, a nominee must have 10 years or more experience in the field and a record of achievements with demonstrable impact.

Previous recipients include the late Daniel J. Wright; former MDHHS Director Marilyn Stephen; Crawford County Court Administrator Thomas Haskel; Midland County Probate Judge Dorene Allen; former Supreme Court Chief Justice Maura Corrigan; Calhoun County Friend of the Court Jeffrey Albaugh; Executive Director Children’s Services Agency Steve Yager; Genesee County Circuit Judge Duncan Beagle, Wexford County Probate Judge Kenneth Tacoma, Cheboygan County Probate Judge Robert Butts, and last year’s recipient, Ingham County Circuit Court Judge Laura Baird.

To nominate a candidate, complete the Nomination form and return by **Friday, October 30, 2020**. The Wright Award recipient will be honored with a special virtual presentation celebrating 2020 Michigan Adoption Day on November 24.

-MSC-



# MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

*John Nevin, Communications Director*

Ph: 517-373-0129 Twitter: @MISupremeCourt FB: facebook.com/misupremecourt

## **Daniel J. Wright Lifetime Achievement Award**

### **2020 Nomination Form**

**Nominee's name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nominee's position or job title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of nominee's organization or employer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City, State, Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail address:** \_\_\_\_\_

Why is your nominee a worthy candidate for the Wright Award? Please be as complete as possible; use a separate sheet if necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Nominator's name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**All nominations are due by Friday, October 30, 2020.**

Submit this form by e-mail to [WrightAwardNominations@courts.mi.gov](mailto:WrightAwardNominations@courts.mi.gov) or fax to 517-373-9831.

Direct questions should be sent to Lynn Seaks at [SeaksL@courts.mi.gov](mailto:SeaksL@courts.mi.gov) or at 517-373-1067 or Elizabeth Henderson at [HendersonE@courts.mi.gov](mailto:HendersonE@courts.mi.gov) or 517-373-2621.