

# MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT



## *Office of Public Information*

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contact: Marcia McBrien | (517) 373-0129

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### **CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERT P. YOUNG, JR. NAMED “LAWYER OF THE YEAR” BY MICHIGAN LAWYERS WEEKLY; COURT REFORM WORK CITED**

LANSING, MI, March 15, 2012 – Chief Justice Robert P. Young, Jr. has been named “Lawyer of the Year” by Michigan Lawyers Weekly in recognition of his work on court reform.

In acknowledging the honor, Young said, “To me, this award is much more than a personal honor. It is recognition of the effort to reform our courts to become more efficient, accountable, and above all service-oriented. Thus far, our reform efforts have been broadly embraced by the Supreme Court, leaders in the judiciary, the State Bar and by the Governor and Legislature. Everyone deserves credit.”

Lawyers Weekly made the announcement today at its annual “Leaders in the Law” awards ceremony in Troy. Young was selected from among the newspaper’s 25 “[Leaders in the Law](#)” for 2012.

In its profile of Young, Lawyers Weekly observed, “[U]nder the leadership of Chief Justice Robert Young, Jr., the Michigan court system is undergoing a facelift of unprecedented proportions.” Lawyers Weekly noted that the chief justice [successfully advocated for eliminating judgeships](#) that were no longer supported by workload.

In the interview, Young also talked about the next wave of Michigan court reform, including courts sharing resources and combining some operations.

“In many communities, we have a probate, district, and circuit judge in the same building, but they might as well be in different communities for the way they interact with each other,” Young told Lawyers Weekly. “If you were in the private sector ... you’d at least be looking at ways to combine backroom operations.”

Young also advocates for better use of technology and best practices for courts, including making court performance measures available online.

“An element of our next reform effort is to incentivize our courts to adopt best practices,” Young said. “We will post online our own judicial dashboard so the public can see how well we’re doing.”

Young has been a justice of the Michigan Supreme Court since 1999; he was elected chief justice by his fellow justices in January 2011. A graduate of Harvard College and Harvard

Law School, he joined the law firm of Dickinson, Wright, Moon, Van Dusen & Freeman in 1978, becoming a partner in the firm in 1982. In 1992, he joined AAA of Michigan, serving as its vice-president, corporate secretary and general counsel until his 1995 appointment to the Michigan Court of Appeals, where he served until 1999.

The chief justice 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 is a former chair of the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce "Leadership Detroit" program.

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