



Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

News

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Judge Johnson to speak at Adoption Day event

For immediate release

SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Circuit Judge Gary Johnson, who is Chairman of the Supreme Court’s Court Improvement Program Oversight Board, will speak at the Adoption Day ceremony at 6:45 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 21, at the South Charleston Memorial Ice Arena, 20 RHL Blvd., South Charleston.

The candlelight ceremony will honor the more than 1,000 children in West Virginia who are waiting to be adopted. November is National Adoption Month (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/nam/>).

The candlelight ceremony follows a two-hour free skating ice event open to the public, but geared toward adoptive and foster families. The Recruitment and Retention Collaborative will cover ice skating fees and provide pizza, snacks, desert, and hot chocolate. The free skate begins at 4:45 p.m. If you have questions about the event, please contact Carrie Dawson at 1-866-CALL-MWV or cdawson@missionwv.org.

Judge Johnson is the only judge in the Twenty-Eighth Judicial Circuit (Nicholas County) and has been chairman of the CIP Oversight Board since 2001. As CIP chairman, he helped establish the first West Virginia University College of Law class on child protection and the law.

He also is a member of the Supreme Court’s Juvenile Justice Commission, the 2014 Governor’s Intergovernmental Task Force on Juvenile Justice, and the Commission to Study the Residential Placement of Children.

Judge Johnson has received numerous awards and citations. In 1999 he was declared an “Angel in Adoption” by the United States Congress and the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute. In 2009 he received the Alliance for Children’s West Virginia Leader for Children Award; the Commissioner’s Award from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Administration on Children, Youth and Families; and a Purple Ribbon Award from the West Virginia Coalition Against Domestic Violence. He also is a recipient of the 1998 Protection of Children Award from the Nicholas County Family Resource Network and Nicholas/Webster Foster Parent Association, the 2008 Extra Mile Award from the West Virginia Children’s Justice Task Force, and the 2013 Steward of Unity Award from the West Virginia Child Care Association.

Judge Johnson is a past president of the West Virginia Judicial Association, past chairman of the Judicial Hearing Board, and is a former member of the Mass Litigation Panel. He has been appointed numerous times to sit on the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia in cases in which a justice was recused, including one appointment as Acting Chief Justice.

Judge Johnson earned an undergraduate degree in history and political science in 1973 and a master's degree in public administration in 1974, all from West Virginia University, before completing his law degree in 1980 at West Virginia University College of Law.

Anyone interested in adopting a child from foster care can call Frameworks of Mission WV at 1-866-CALL-MWV or visit <http://missionwv.org/frameworks/waiting-children/> or http://www.wvdhhr.org/oss/adoption/wv_children.asp.