

Andrew Jackson Higgins

Excellence in Juvenile Justice Award

Thursday, October 25, 2018



The Award

The Honorable Andrew Jackson Higgins, June 21, 1921 – September 14, 2011, is remembered for being a gracious humanitarian and for his lifetime commitment to serving the best interests of Missouri's children.

Andrew Jackson Higgins practiced law in Platte City, Missouri, from 1948-1960. He also served as Prosecuting Attorney of Platte County from 1951-1957 and as Mayor of Platte City from 1958-1960. He was appointed Judge of the Sixth Judicial Circuit in May 1960 and served until June 1964, when he accepted an appointment as a Commissioner of the Supreme Court, a position he held until July 1979. From 1979-1991, Judge Higgins served as a Missouri Supreme Court Judge and was Chief Justice from 1985-1987.

He was educated in Platte City Public Schools, and he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Central College in 1943 and a Bachelor of Laws degree from Washington University in 1948.

Judge Higgins provided support and leadership to Missouri Bar projects that modified Supreme Court Rules on continuing legal education, substance abuse intervention, and child support awards. In October 1990, he received the Bar's Spurgeon Smithson Award for outstanding service toward the increase and diffusion of justice in our society.

Judge Higgins organized the Missouri Supreme Court Task Force on Permanency Planning for Abused and Neglected Children in 1982 and served as its chairman until his retirement. Under his leadership, Missouri inaugurated an interdisciplinary approach to the problem of child abuse and neglect, which has served as a national model for coordinated efforts in permanency planning.

Working directly with the **Missouri Juvenile Justice Association**, Judge Higgins led the effort to secure adoption of Supreme Court Rule 111.03, which established standards for operating juvenile detention facilities and removing children from adult jails.

Judge Higgins was active in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and frequently lectured on children's issues. He served on the Advisory Board to the Board of Directors of the National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association. He served as chair of the Missouri Bar's Commission on Children and the Law, was a member of the Board of Directors of the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse-Missouri Chapter, and was a consultant on children's issues to the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. He was recognized as the 1987 Missouri Child Care Association Child Advocate of the Year and was the 1990 recipient of the Ann Dandurant Award by the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse-Missouri Chapter. Judge Higgins received the 1998 Gene Schwilck Award for Outstanding Service to Missouri Children and Youth. In 2002, Prevent Child Abuse-Missouri established an Award in his name to recognize his unparalleled work in abuse/neglect prevention.

In May of 1992, the Board of Directors of the Missouri Juvenile Justice Association established the **ANDREW JACKSON HIGGINS EXCELLENCE IN JUVENILE JUSTICE AWARD**. The award recognizes an individual who shares Judge Higgins' commitment and dedication, and who embraces the MJJA's philosophy.

Previous recipients of the Award: Representative Kaye Steinmetz, Randy Thomas, Ken Hensiek, The Honorable Dennis Kehm, The Honorable Ninian Edwards, Robert Perry, Jay Wood, Rebecca Culler, Mark Steward, The Honorable Susan Block, Barbara Smith, Ray Grush, Sue Ashwell, The Honorable Jimmie Edwards, Denny Atherton, Jeani Longstreth, Gary Waint, Alan Gremli and Bev Newman.

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The Recipient

Cathy Horejes is the Chief Deputy Juvenile Officer - Special Services - in the 22nd Circuit (City of St. Louis) where she has served children and families for over forty-five years. Cathy holds a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Missouri-St. Louis and a Master's Degree in the Administration of Criminal Justice from Lindenwood University.

Cathy has been instrumental in implementing the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) in the 22nd Circuit as well as statewide. She assisted in Missouri's efforts to replicate work that had originated in the City of St. Louis by taking ideas and programming concepts from an existing program and nurturing them into a mature program that is now part of the everyday fabric of how the court conducts business. As Cathy saw that JDAI only addressed a certain portion of the system, she took the initiative to push the 22nd Circuit to adopt an additional strategy by becoming an Annie E. Casey Foundation Deep End site in the first cohort of Deep End sites. As part of Deep End programming, Cathy also developed the Team Support Approach (TSA), a unique model designed to assist youth struggling on supervision. It brings together the youth, family members, treatment providers, coaches, friends or other people who are important to the youth, and - with a facilitator - develops a plan to provide specific support to assist youth in getting back on track and maintaining success without having to be placed in detention or another restrictive option. The program recently received the Excellence in Programming Award from MJJA. Also, as part of the Deep End work, Cathy brought the Full Frame Initiative to St. Louis City to provide training and align efforts in collaboration with Children's Division, the Missouri Division of Youth Services and the juvenile office. Other accomplishments include starting a "Comfort Room" in detention and connecting with Better Family Life to move Team Support Approach meetings, Family Dinners and Family Youth Advisory Groups into a community setting where youth and families are more likely to connect and sustain involvement without the strong arm of the court being at the helm.

Cathy is a member of the Missouri Juvenile Justice Association and currently serves as Program Team Chair. As chair of the Program Team, she continues her statewide influence in the provision of excellent training opportunities to juvenile justice professionals attending the yearly statewide spring and fall MJJA educational conferences. Cathy has been instrumental in securing training that enhances the skills of Missouri juvenile justice personnel in order to improve the quality and the equity of services and support to youth and families who come in contact with the juvenile justice system. Cathy also served on the MJJA Board of Directors from 2002-2013. Cathy's work on the MJJA board has helped ensure that MJJA continues to be the recognized leader in Missouri on both state and national juvenile justice issues while remaining true to their mission of promoting justice for children, youth and families.

Cathy has also served as the Chair of the Post-Disposition Delinquency and Status Subcommittee of the Juvenile Standards Work Group for the Missouri Juvenile Officer Performance Standards, which were recently approved and adopted by the Supreme Court of Missouri; Cathy has also played a central role in Standards training for the staff in the 22nd Circuit.