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Contact: Kathryn Dolan
317.234.4722

INDIANA SUPREME COURT & DANIELS ADMINISTRATION ACCEPT NATIONAL CENTER FOR STATE COURTS JURY IMPROVEMENT AWARD

Indiana was touted as a leader in jury practices by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) as a recipient of a 2009 G. Thomas Munsterman Award for Jury Innovations. Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard accepted the award on behalf of the Court emphasizing it is shared with Governor Mitch Daniels' Administration because their collaboration made the project a reality.

"Indiana is using 21st century technology to ensure that our juries represent the people of our state," explained Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard. "With Governor Daniels' partnership we created an accurate statewide jury list that ensures a broader and more reflective pool of applicants will be eligible to serve on an Indiana jury." The NCSC presented the award to the Indiana Supreme Court's Judicial Technology and Automation Committee for the Jury Management System (JMS) which includes a master jury pool list.

Governor Mitch Daniels, who received a standing ovation from the judges in the audience, saluted the judicial branch for the accomplishment, "It has been a great experience for us to work together with JTAC and to know we are producing a better government, efficient and probably more effective government."

The master jury pool list was developed for the Court's Jury Management System (JMS) by the Division of State Court Administration's Judicial Technology and Automation Committee. The list is created using a combination of records from the Indiana Department of Revenue (DOR) and the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV). Duplicates are eliminated and the records are merged. Individuals identified as deceased, underage for jury service or having moved out of state are also removed from the list. Lastly, the list is validated against U.S. Postal Service address data and addresses are flagged for possible delivery errors.

The new master jury pool list includes 5.2 million people and corresponds much more closely with Indiana citizens eligible for jury service. The Court's Division of State Court Administration distributes the list to Indiana trial courts. Development of the new list has greatly decreased the amount of undeliverable mail. And because the list is compiled at the state level and distributed statewide at no cost to county courts, county taxpayers no longer bear the expense of developing jury pool lists. Many courts have also noticed a considerable increase in the diversity of jury pools. "This is a technical accomplishment that matters in real life," said Chief Justice Shepard. "The notion that you have a right to a trial by a jury of your peers depends on whether the people in the box really are your peers."

Judge Gregory E. Mize of the NCSC presented the award at the Indiana Judicial Center's Winter Conference with approximately 200 trial and appellate court judges present. In presenting the award he said, "Indiana courts, you've done it again. For years, you have empowered citizens on a jury by allowing note taking, allowing them to ask questions and to discuss. You also provide instructions on the basic legal rules. Now, you give another example for the nation. Your new



Justice Frank Sullivan, Jr., Governor Mitch Daniels, Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard, Judge Gregory E. Mize

master jury list system is efficient, low cost, centralized without creating a dynasty, and you provide great technical support to all users.”

The Jury Management System is just one example of the Supreme Court’s technology improvement projects. Justice Frank Sullivan, Jr., who chairs JTAC thanked the Governor for his support of all court technology initiatives and said, “Indiana courts and agencies throughout the Daniels’ Administration use technology to increase public safety and save taxpayers money.”

The National Center for State Courts is dedicated to improving the administration of justice through leadership and service to courts around the world. Its Munsterman Award recognizes states, local courts, organizations, or individuals that have made significant improvements or innovations in jury procedures, operations and practices. For more information on the National Center for State Courts visit www.ncsc.org. For more information on the Indiana Supreme Court visit www.courts.in.gov.

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