



Third Judicial Circuit of Michigan



COLEMAN A. YOUNG MUNICIPAL CENTER • 2 WOODWARD AVE, SUITE 711 • DETROIT, 48226-3413

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Contact: Michael Scott, Public Information Officer

Phone: 313-218-3575

Eleven Wayne County families are celebrated during Michigan Reunification Day

Detroit, MI, July 17, 2024 – The stories of 11 Wayne County families who were unified based on the efforts of judges, referees, and professionals at several state, county and local agencies were shared at the state's Reunification Day celebration in late June, hosted by the Third Judicial Circuit of Michigan in Detroit.

Reunification is the culmination of a rigorous process in the courts to help parents whose rights have been terminated work toward reunifying with their children who have been placed in foster care. The Michigan Supreme Court, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Michigan Federal for Children and Families, the State Court Administrative Office of Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Services, and the Michigan Court Improvement Program sponsored the celebration.

Attended by Supreme Court Justices Kyra H. Bolden and Megan K. Cavanagh, Michigan Reunification Day featured families and advocates telling the success stories of reunification and the positive impact that has on entire families. The program featured remarks from Justices Cavanagh and Bolden, Third Judicial Circuit Chief Judge Patricia Perez Fresard, and Third Judicial Circuit Family Juvenile Interim Presiding Judge Shelia Gibson, among others.

Michigan Reunification Day is also an opportunity to recognize the vital role that community partners play in helping to strengthen, support, and reunify families. As such, the event honored three outstanding statewide child welfare leaders with Guy Thompson Family Preservation Awards- Brittney Barros, Nancy Pfeifer and Leila Sanders.

"There are so many people and departments involved with reunifying a family and the long-term impact cannot be measured," said Fresard. "It was one of my favorite events I've participated in during my time as Chief of the Third Judicial Circuit because it's a great example of what the courts and other agencies can do to positively influence families."

Now in its seventh year, Michigan Reunification Day is a part of the American Bar Association's annual National Reunification Month in June, which is celebrated in 32 states. Reunification Day is intended to recognize the essential role courts, community members, professionals, volunteers, and other partners play in strengthening and supporting families so they can be reunited.

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About the Third Judicial Circuit

The Third Judicial Circuit of Michigan is the largest circuit court in the state, with 59 judges and three operating divisions. It has jurisdiction over civil, criminal, and family matters arising in Wayne County. Learn more at www.3rdcc.org.

Our Mission: We serve the community by providing accessible and equal justice for all.

Our Vision: We are an exemplary and innovative Court leading with integrity in providing justice and public service.

For more information, visit our website www.3rdcc.org.

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