



## Missouri Juvenile Justice Association

Fall 2013

### Educational Conference

# Andrew Jackson Higgins Excellence in Juvenile Justice Award Thursday, October 24, 2013 - 12 noon



## The Recipient

Jeani Longstreth began her career in 1976 working as a Counselor for Missouri Girls Town in Mountain Grove. She then taught pre-school at the Little Red School House in Springfield, Missouri before beginning her long and prestigious career in juvenile justice.

In 1978, Ms. Longstreth began her employment with the 28<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit-Vernon, Barton, Cedar and Dade counties as a Deputy Juvenile Officer. In 1997, Jeani was promoted to the position of Chief Juvenile Officer where she remained until her retirement in December 2012.

Shortly after beginning her career in juvenile justice, Jeani joined the Missouri Juvenile Officers Association which is now known as Missouri Juvenile Justice Association ( MJJA). Jeani has served MJJA in several capacities over the years. In the early '80's Jeani was appointed to the MJJA Board of Directors and served in some capacity until 2004. During this time, Jeani served on numerous committees, assisted in re-writing training program materials and served as a trainer in many capacities to Law Enforcement, Mental Health Workers, Child Fatality Review Panels, as well as Children's Division Workers, and MJJA Members. In 1980, Jeani was appointed by Governor Joe Teasdale to his Task Force on Sexual Assault and in 1998 served on the Governor's Task Force on Children's Justice.

From 1996 to 2000, she was Chairman of the DJO Committee where she is best known for her lobbying efforts in support of HB 971. Jeani served as the "Poster Child" for this bill which brought uniformity to the Juvenile Courts primarily in the rural areas of the State by bringing juvenile court personnel in multi-county circuits under the State of Missouri payroll as well as increased financial reimbursements to single first class counties and the City of St. Louis.

In 1994 she received the honor of "Outstanding Women Who Make a Difference" from the local Business and Professional Women's Group.

In 2004 Jeani was appointed by the Missouri Supreme Court to the Juvenile Division Education Committee. She fulfilled that appointment until her retirement from the Court in December of 2013.

She is a past member of the National Council of Juvenile Court Judges and has participated in national conferences.

Locally, Jeani has served as a founding member of the Child Advocacy Council of Vernon County; founding member of the McGinnis Youth Camp Board; founding member of Area 4C Foster camp; founding member of the Vernon County Youth Task Force; founding member of BarCeDa Stake Holders; the Youth Advisory Board of DYS; the Jason Foundation for Suicide Prevention; Sunny Days Day Care Board; Bob White Youth Camp Board; and a Foster Parents Support Group.

Jeani Longstreth earned a Bachelor of Science from Missouri State University, Springfield, Missouri, in Psychology and Sociology and has completed both the Basic and Advanced Management Certification Programs.

Since her retirement in 2012, Jeani continues to be active as a Board Member of The Children's Center of Southwest Missouri, serving as an Executive Board Member and a forensic interviewer as well as serves on the local advisory board. Her unquestionable commitment to The Children's Center is demonstrated by her recent fundraising efforts to secure monies to build a new facility to house the Center to better serve the needs of the children brought to their attention for assessment and treatment for allegations of child abuse.

Jeani is also a continuing member of the Child Advocacy Council of Vernon County and serves on the University of Missouri Extension Council. She has established a private consulting business and does court ordered home studies in the 28<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit.

Jeani and her husband, Kent, live on a farm in rural Vernon County and own a cow/calf cattle operation bringing quality Angus beef to your dinner table. They spend what free time they have camping and fishing the waterways of the beautiful State of Missouri.