

# Andrew Jackson Higgins

## Excellence in Juvenile Justice Award

### Thursday, October 26, 2017



## 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.

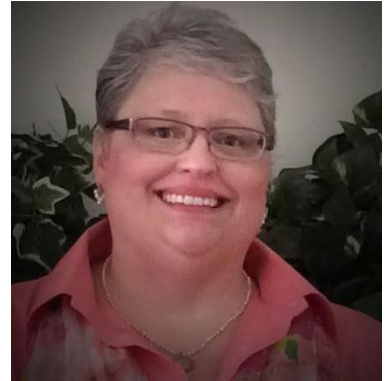
Judge Higgins was active in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and frequently lectured on children's issues. He served on the Advisory Board to the Board of Directors of the National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association. He served as chair of the Missouri Bar's Commission 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, and Alan Gremli.



**Andrew Jackson Higgins  
Excellence in Juvenile Justice Award  
Thursday, October 26, 2017**



**The Recipient**

Bev Newman is the Chief Juvenile Officer in the 17<sup>th</sup> Circuit, where she has served children and families for thirty years. Bev holds a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Central Missouri, and holds management and supervision certificates from Missouri State University's Management Development Institute. Bev is a Georgetown University Center for Juvenile Justice Reform Fellow in the area of diversion and is also a Certified Court Manager through the Missouri Court Management Institute.

Under Bev's leadership, the 17<sup>th</sup> Circuit has been selected as a Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) site, and a Crossover Youth Implementation Site. Bev has also lead efforts to collaboratively develop and implement programs such as the Cass County Youth Court, Educational Neglect Alternative Services, and the Supervised Visitation Center.

Bev has served on several statewide committees, including: Missouri Juvenile Officer Performance Standards Work Group (Chair); Missouri Juvenile Officer Performance Standards Oversight Work Group (Vice Chair); Juvenile Division Education Committee for the Missouri Coordinating Commission on Judicial Education (Chair); Missouri Court Automation Committee; Children's Justice Task Force; Juvenile Detention Standards Work Group, and Juvenile Focus Group. In 2014, Bev was selected to serve as a member of the Missouri Juvenile Justice Task Force created by SCR 29. Bev is a member of the Missouri Juvenile Justice Association Board of Directors and has served as Board President since 2014.

From 2014-2017, Bev served as Chair of the Juvenile Officer Performance Standards Work Group. This group produced a groundbreaking publication which provides guidance and direction to every juvenile officer in Missouri. The Standards clearly define the expectations of the juvenile officer to fulfill their legal and ethical obligations and ensure "excellence" as the standard for responsiveness and provision of services to children, youth and families. From 2014-2016, there were approximately 140 meetings of the Juvenile Standards Work Group and its subcommittees, with an investment of almost 4,200 hours of work by members. Bev attended and chaired every JSWG meeting and frequently participated in subcommittee and small work group meetings, in addition to making multiple presentations before the Joint Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect, the Supreme Court of Missouri, Children's Division, law enforcement agencies, juvenile officers and media outlets. In addition, Bev was instrumental in engaging numerous professional partners and stakeholders, recruiting them for participation in development of the Standards.