

## **Jimmie Edwards: Chief Juvenile Court Judge, St. Louis Circuit Court**



St. Louis native Jimmie Edwards has been a circuit court judge for the past 18 years. His ground-breaking work in the area of juvenile delinquency has made him one of the best-known and respected judges in Missouri as well as a much sought-after speaker and guest lecturer.

Judge Edwards grew up on the north side of St. Louis in the shadows of the city's infamous Pruitt-Igoe public housing complex. He is a firm believer that education, discipline and exposure to the broader world are the keys to success for every inner-city child. "If the community, and that includes judges, does not take it upon itself to educate the children then our community and what we stand for will be no more," Judge Edwards has been quoted as saying.

Last year Judge Edwards took the unprecedented step of opening a school for some of St. Louis' most troubled youth. The Innovative Concept Academy has become a home away from home for hundreds of juveniles who have been expelled from traditional public schools due to serious and disruptive behavioral problems. In just one year's time the Academy has garnered national attention from the *Wall Street Journal*, WGN Radio, *People* and other news media for its inventive approach to educating and rehabilitating delinquent teens.

In his career Judge Edwards has been the recipient of numerous awards, including Mentor of the Year from 100 Black Men, the Annie Malone Children and Family Advocacy Award, Saint Louis University's Teacher of the Year and the 2010 National Bar Association's Raymond Pace Alexander Award for Outstanding Judicial Advocacy and Humanity.