



MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

John Nevin, Communications Director

Ph: 517-373-0129 Twitter: @MISupremeCourt FB: facebook.com/misupremecourt

Michigan Adoption Day 2014 to be held Tuesday, November 25 State's celebration of adoptive families now in 12th year, includes more than 30 counties

LANSING, MI, November 19, 2014 – Many Michigan families will have a special reason to celebrate this Thanksgiving season as they welcome new members into their families on Michigan's 12th annual Adoption Day. These happy families will be celebrating, along with judges, court staff, and social workers as adoptions are finalized for about 100 children.

“Giving Thanks for Families” is a holiday tradition held on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving each year, highlighting the importance of adoption and the needs of children in foster care. Michigan Adoption Day is co-sponsored by the Michigan Supreme Court, the Michigan Department of Human Services, the Child Welfare Services division of the State Court Administrative Office, and Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE). Many courts will observe Michigan Adoption Day by finalizing adoptions; others will hold informational events to reach potential adoptive parents. [Click here for a list of events statewide.](#)

“On Adoption Day we witness the joy of the adoptive families and hear heart-warming stories as courts statewide open their doors to share the good news,” said Chief Justice Robert P. Young, Jr. “By making public what is usually private ceremony, we hope to inspire more families to consider adoption and call attention to the needs of the young people who remain in foster care.”

“Every child deserves a safe, loving and stable home,” former justice and current DHS Director Maura D. Corrigan said. “I'm proud of the progress the state has made over the last four years in finding forever homes for our state's most vulnerable youth. This will be my last Adoption Day as DHS director, but the new families that are formed on this day and other days throughout the year will always be close to my heart.”

In the Supreme Court courtroom in the Hall of Justice in Lansing, the Chief Justice will join judges Robert S. Sykes from Ionia County, Laura L. Baird from Ingham County, and Joan E. Young from Oakland County, in finalizing adoptions. The ceremony, which begins at 10 a.m., will also include the presentation of the Daniel J. Wright Lifetime Achievement Award.

The award, jointly sponsored by the Michigan Supreme Court and the Michigan Department of Human services, was established in honor of the late Daniel J. Wright of Grand Ledge. He was an attorney and longtime leader in child support and child welfare reform and was credited with the “Michigan Miracle” in 2002. As special assistant to then-Chief Justice Maura D. Corrigan, he led the state's efforts to upgrade Michigan's child support enforcement system by federally mandated deadlines. Wright saved the state \$142 million in federal fines and earned the state a \$36 million refund for fines it had already paid. Later, as director of the Friend of the Court

Bureau and Child Welfare Services divisions of the State Court Administrative Office, Wright helped create the state's "Adoption Forums" to deal with adoption barriers that were stranding children in foster care. He worked on legislation to give foster children a greater voice in decisions about their lives. The law now requires courts to consult the child when holding a hearing about permanent home placement.

Jeffrey Albaugh, Calhoun County Friend of the Court, is this year's recipient of the award, which recognizes outstanding service to Michigan children and families. He was appointed to the position by Governor Milliken in January 1980. During Albaugh's 34-year tenure as Friend of The Court, his office has successfully collected in excess of \$600 million in child support. Having this money in the hands of custodial parents has helped feed, house, and clothe countless numbers of children.

Anyone interest in adopting a child may contact MARE at 3840 Packard Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48108. MARE can be also reached Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. at (800) 589-6273 (in Michigan), via fax at (734) 528-1695, or through the [MARE website](#).

Click [here](#) more information about Michigan Adoption Day, including details regarding local events in more than 30 communities all across the state.

Michigan Adoption Fast Facts

- As of September 30, there are about 12,800 children in Michigan's foster care system.
- There are about 2,500 children whose parents' rights have been terminated and have a goal of adoption.
- More than 2,160 children were adopted in Michigan in FY2014 through DHS or private adoption agencies. Historical trends indicate that on average 32 percent of children were adopted by their foster parents, 29 percent of children were adopted by relatives, and 39 percent of children were adopted by a recruited family.
- Approximately 90 percent of children who are available for adoption qualify for assistance to help families with some of the costs of bringing children into their homes.
- More than 27,000 adopted children receive ongoing support subsidies.
- Post adoption services are available statewide through eight Post Adoption Resource Centers and offer the following services: case management, including short-term and emergency in-home intervention; coordination of community services; information dissemination; education; training; advocacy; family recreation activities and support.