

New York State Unified Court System



Merit Performance Awards Presentation

Judith S. Kaye
Chief Judge

Jonathan Lippman
Chief Administrative Judge

New York State
Court of Appeals

Albany, N.Y.
May 1, 2001

Presentation of Awards

Honorable Jonathan Lippman

Chief Administrative Judge of the Courts

It is our tradition each Law Day to honor the men and women of our workforce whose exemplary achievements and high professionalism have enhanced the quality of our judicial system.

On this Law Day 2001, we are pleased to continue the tradition by recognizing four remarkable individuals for their special contributions to improving the services we provide to families and children, for strengthening our ties to the community, for their commitment to helping those in need, and for giving of themselves—continuously and in every conceivable way—to promote the well being of our citizenry. In the knowledge, dedication, selflessness and enthusiasm that these men and women bring to their workplaces on a daily basis, we find the very essence of public service.

On behalf of the Unified Court System, today's distinguished honorees, and their families and co-workers, I wish to thank Chief Judge Kaye, the Associate Judges of the Court of Appeals and Attorney General Spitzer for again sponsoring these presentations as an important part of the Court of Appeals Law Day 2001 Program.

2001 Merit Performance Award
Community Service and Humanitarian Pursuits

Shawn A. Fagan
Secretary, Buffalo City Court

A secretary for two Buffalo City Court judges since 1996, Shawn A. Fagan also teaches a legal secretarial course for the Kenmore-Tonawanda School District. When she's not working at the court or teaching her legal secretarial students, Ms. Fagan spends much of her time volunteering at community organizations, churches and schools.

Ms. Fagan's primary focus is in two crucial areas—voting and education, both of which tie into this year's Law Day theme, which centers on the welfare of our society's children and families. With respect to her voting-related efforts, Ms. Fagan recruits and trains volunteers to operate polling sites in the Buffalo area, working for an organization called "Kids Voting." As an active member of the NAACP, she serves as the local chapter's Voting Empowerment Chair, and last year developed a successful voter registration campaign that resulted in the registration of more than 1,000 new voters. She is also the NAACP's local Newsletter Chair, with her chapter's newsletter placing second at the 1999 NAACP National Conference.

As one who understands the true value of a good education, Shawn is an active member of the Bennett High School Parent Association and serves on the Law Magnet Advisory Board, the Erie County Community College's Advisory Board and the University at Buffalo's Urban Education Initiative panel.

Last year, she organized Bennett High School's Black History program. Additionally, she participates in the school's "Teacher for a Day" program, sharing her knowledge with the students and stressing how important it is for them to continue with their studies. Ms. Fagan has served on the Buffalo Board of

Education's Root Cause Analysis Team, researching issues relating to parental involvement in the schools. As a member of the United Way's Community Building Team, she also studies issues affecting our youth.

We applaud Shawn Fagan for reaching out to the community and making a positive impact in these critical areas. For her obvious love for and dedication to her community, particularly its youth, we are pleased to present her with a 2001 Merit Performance Award for Community Service and Humanitarian Pursuits.

2001 Merit Performance Award
Community Service and Humanitarian Pursuits

Gary V. Mazur

Court Officer, Nassau County District Court

Gary Mazur, a court officer at the Nassau County District Court for the past 11 years, has spent most of his life striving to make his community and the world at large a better place to live. Officer Mazur has been a volunteer for the Mineola Fire Department since 1976. Gary rose through the ranks, was elected to the Chief's Office in 1991, and became Chief of the Department in 1995, coordinating the efforts of more than 100 firefighters as well as support staff.

While assigned to the Chief's Office, Gary helped initiate "Operation Santa," a Yuletide event during which he and other Department members don Santa Claus beards and costumes, traveling door-to-door to visit young children throughout the community. Following his stint as Chief of the Department, Officer Mazur was named head advisor to the Department's Junior Fire Fighters, a program that trains youngsters from 14 to 18 in firefighting skills. Although they're not permitted to go out on real fire calls, the teens learn everything the adult volunteers do. Upon becoming the juniors' head advisor, Mr. Mazur spearheaded a recruitment campaign, resulting in a more than sixfold increase in the number of program participants.

Under Gary's guidance, the juniors are instilled with a strong sense of community spirit, organizing fund-raisers and engaging in other community service activities throughout the year. They host a pasta dinner every February, raising money for the community while bringing together many of its senior citizens and young families. As winter turns to spring, Officer

Mazur and his young recruits begin collecting food for distribution to local soup kitchens and homeless shelters. During summer, Gary takes the juniors on camping trips and recreational outings, and as Christmas nears he and some of the Department's other volunteers—including the juniors—gear up for Operation Santa. And whenever there's a winter storm, you can find Officer Mazur lending a hand to Mineola's Operation Snow Shovel, which sends scores of young volunteers out to clear snowy entrances and walkways for local seniors.

For his tireless devotion to the community and his compassion for the young, we are pleased to present Gary Mazur with a Merit Performance Award for Community Service and Humanitarian Pursuits.

**2001 Merit Performance Award
Superior Work Performance**

Jacqueline Green

Principal Office Assistant, Westchester County Family Court

Although she joined Westchester County Family Court as a Principal Office Assistant just over three years ago, Jacqueline Green has already earned veteran status when it comes to her knowledge of the court's operations and procedures. Today Jacqueline is known throughout the courthouse for her outstanding professionalism and readiness to pitch in, no matter what the task.

Within months of her arrival at the White Plains court in January 1998, Jacqueline mastered her new job responsibilities and then some. She even took part in revamping the court's automation systems and making sure that all of the support staff are well trained in the demanding duties of a busy Family Court. Leaving no stone unturned in completing each and every job request that comes her way, Jacqueline always looks for the best, most efficient way to handle any given task.

Juggling a variety of duties in the chaotic, often stressful Family Court environment, Jacqueline provides answers to a range of questions on case-related matters from litigants—some of them frightened or agitated—and their attorneys, also replying to inquiries from the court's busy Judges and staff as well as probation officers, caseworkers and others. Despite her hectic pace, she is consistently courteous and helpful, leaving a lasting impression on all those she meets. She has earned the praise of everyone she encounters in the court, Judges, attorneys, fellow employees and the public. Jacqueline is famous in Westchester for her proficiency, her kindness and her lively sense of humor—all contributing to make the court a better place for everyone who comes or works there.

Gentle yet firm, Jacqueline also has a gift for defusing the tense situations that sometimes arise between parties at Family Court. Jacqueline truly stands out for her diligence, extraordinary interpersonal skills, resourceful nature and enthusiasm.

For her exceptional commitment to the children and families served by Family Court, it is especially fitting that we pay tribute to Jacqueline Green on Law Day 2001.

***2001 Merit Performance Award
Act of Heroism***

Mitchel S. Wallace

Court Officer, Queens Family Court

While commuting home on the Long Island Railroad last August 7th, Mark Ingberman went into cardiac arrest. Railroad personnel stopped the train and called the police. The conductor announced the situation to the other passengers and asked if anyone aboard the train had emergency medical training and could provide assistance to Mr. Ingberman.

Responding to the conductor's plea for help, Court Officer Mitchel Wallace stepped forward, finding Mr. Ingberman collapsed on the floor of the train. Officer Wallace immediately noticed that the fallen man wasn't breathing and didn't have a pulse. Without a mask or any protective equipment, he began performing mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and applying chest compressions to the collapsed man. He continued with his resuscitation efforts for 15 minutes, until paramedics arrived with a defibrillator, to start Mr. Ingberman's heart.

Mitchel didn't stop there, but accompanied the ambulance to the hospital, and later met with the man's family to narrate the story of how Mr. Ingberman had collapsed on the train. The physicians who treated Mark Ingberman credit Officer Wallace with saving his life.

Although he has worked in the courts for only a year, Officer Wallace has already gained a reputation for his excellent job performance. His actions this past August 7th reflect his fine character, which also comes through in his everyday approach to his job. Mitchel consistently demonstrates his willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty.

For his selfless efforts last August 7th and every other day, his ability to remain calm and clearheaded in an emergency, and his proactive approach to life, we are proud to honor Officer Mitchel Wallace with a 2001 Merit Performance Award for his act of heroism.