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OAKLAND CIRCUIT JUDGE HONORED

Oakland County, MI. (June 3, 2005) – The Honorable Fred M. Mester, Oakland County Circuit Court Judge, voted by *The Detroit News* readers as one of the top three civil or criminal judges for 2005, was presented with the Frances R. Avadenka Memorial Award at the Oakland County Bar Association Annual Meeting Dinner on June 1, 2005. The award, named in memory of the Bar Association's first female president, is presented to a member of the association who has made significant contributions to the community outside of the legal profession.

"He (Judge Mester) has undertaken Herculean efforts on behalf of the children of Pontiac," commented Oakland County Circuit Judge Michael Warren. "Under his invaluable leadership, the Pontiac Alumni Foundation last August started a mentoring program for middle school students to help them stay on the right path to success. His leadership has resulted in the active engagement of many responsible community leaders and corporations on behalf of Pontiac's youth. His dedication is serving the children of Pontiac exceedingly well."

Earlier this year, Judge Mester was honored with the Oakland County Bar Association Diversity Committee Leon Hubbard Award for being the topmost individual who has achieved an outstanding record of community service, has promoted cultural diversity and social equality, and worked to improve the quality of life for all people. Judge Mester served as Co-Chair of the NAACP's 75th Anniversary in Oakland County, was involved in establishing the annual Central Michigan University Lem Tucker scholarship, and was influential in the Pontiac Alumni Foundation's efforts to resolve the widespread problems affecting the Pontiac community and its youth.

Judge Mester has been a circuit judge since 1982 and has received many awards for his professional and civic contributions including, the John N. O'Brien Memorial Award for Distinguished Community Activities and the NAACP Humanitarian Award. A recipient of an Honorary Doctor of Law Degree from Central Michigan University, his service to the bench was recognized in 1990 when he received the Michigan Corrections Association Judicial Award for extraordinary contributions to the enhancement of the judicial system.

As President of the Federal Bar Association Detroit Chapter, Judge Mester partnered with Federal Judge Damon Keith, then Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court Eastern District, to launch the first new lawyer seminar that would assist new lawyers in bridging the gap

between academia and the practice of law, and which has since been adopted by district courts throughout the United States.

Judge Mester is currently President of the Pontiac Alumni Foundation, Chair of the Board of Directors to the William Booth Legal Aid Clinic (Salvation Army), the Oakland County Community Corrections Board, and Board of Advisors for Common Ground. He is Member of the National Council on Alcoholism and of Wayne State University Board of Directors for the Visitors Nursing College, Charter Member of the Board of Directors to the Center for the Study for Citizenship, and Founder of the Reading to Reduce Recidivism program. Most recently, Judge Mester was appointed to the Michigan Mentoring Commission.

Judge Mester has also held a major and supportive role as an adjunct professor in the Political Science Department of Oakland University and the Paralegal Programs of Oakland University, Madonna University, and Oakland Community College.

In May of this year at a special ceremony held at Oakland Community College, Judge Mester personally presented "The Honorable Fred M. Mester Excellence in Paralegal Studies Award," named by the college in his honor, to Aaron Greenblatt of White Lake Township. The award is bestowed annually to one student who has demonstrated exceptional skills.

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An electronic photograph of the Oakland County Bar Association Annual Meeting Dinner is available as well as an electronic photograph of the Oakland County Bar Association Diversity Dinner. For a copy, please contact Marcia Travis at travism@co.oakland.mi.us