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Court Announces Employee and Volunteer Service Awards for 2016

November 4, 2016. For Immediate Release—Augusta, Maine. Chief Justice Leigh I. Saufley, of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court, today announced the recipients of the Maine Judicial Branch employee performance and volunteer service awards for 2016.

Chief Justice Saufley announced that the recipient of the 2016 Judicial Branch Career Performance Award is Jennifer Kelly of West Gardiner. Ms. Kelly has been employed by the Maine Judicial Branch since 1985. In that time she has worked in a number of positions throughout the Branch and currently serves as a Field Operations Specialist. In that position she works with the clerks in courthouses across the state, working to improve court processes, customer service, and on a variety of special projects. Most recently she supervised the indexing, packaging, destruction and/or removal of more than 50,000 old case files from the Cumberland County Courthouse to permanent storage. In recognizing Ms. Kelly, the Chief Justice said, “Jen Kelly is all in, she never undertakes anything without superior effort from start to finish. Directing the permanent archiving of 50,000 case files was an enormous project. She managed a team of temporary and regular employees who got the job done ahead of schedule. In a court system with many career employees, who work quietly behind the scenes to keep our court system operating smoothly and efficiently, Jen is a true standout!”

Chief Justice Saufley announced that Stephanie Foglio, of Waterboro, is the 2016 Outstanding Judicial Employee of the Year. This award is conferred upon that person who best exemplifies the qualities of competence in providing court services, commitment to public service, respect, courtesy to fellow employees and members of the public, and a willingness to learn and grow. In naming Stephanie the 2016 Outstanding Employee, the Chief Justice said, “Stephanie is one of the most dedicated employees in the entire Judicial Branch. She began her career at the Springvale District Court as an assistant clerk in 2007. While there, she was known for her excellent customer service. In 2013, she was promoted to the Finance Division in the Administrative Office of the

Clerks, and last year was promoted to the Human Resources Department. Although a busy mother and grandmother, who is also pursuing her college degree, she is one of the hardest workers in the Judicial Branch: Stephanie is often first in the office and last to leave. More importantly, as she travels around the state training new employees and resolving other human resource issues, Stephanie is singularly focused on service: How can she help others? Stephanie displays a warmth and respect for her colleagues and the public that is contagious.”

The Chief Justice also recognized all the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteers as the Outstanding Volunteers of 2016. The Chief Justice said, “CASA volunteers are a very special group of people, who volunteer as guardians ad litem for abused and neglected children in Child Protective cases brought by the Department of Human Services. Each CASA volunteer receives at least 4 days of training and is appointed by the judge to assure that the child’s best interests are put before the court. We are proud of the work that these volunteer advocates do on behalf of Maine’s most vulnerable children, and we are so grateful for their service.”

The Roy Rice Award is given to that person, group, or organization that has made an outstanding contribution to the safety and well-being of the employees of the Judicial Branch and public and others who participate in court activities. Chief Justice Saufley announced that this year’s winner is Peter Gallagher, of Wells, who is the only full-time marshal of the York District Court. In conferring the award on Deputy Marshal Gallagher, Chief Justice Saufley observed that, “Deputy Gallagher is widely recognized for his calm demeanor, which helps diffuse situations that can be fraught.”

The Special Service Award for a team was given this year to the 2016 York County Unified Criminal Division Implementation Team. This team of York County judicial officers and clerks had the task of unifying the criminal dockets in four separate courthouses into one case docket. In citing the work of this team, Chief Justice Saufley said, “Implementing the Unified Criminal Docket in York County, which has 4 full time busy courts spread across the County, was a particular challenge. Creating a unified docket and schedule, where 4 dockets and schedules had existed before was an administrative challenge, to say the least. These judges and clerks pulled together and were instrumental in the successful transition to this improved docketing and scheduling model.”

An individual Special Service Award was given to Colleen Heal of South Portland, who works as an administrative assistant in the Portland District Court. After a long time employee in another courthouse retired, Colleen left her Portland office on special assignment for a long period of time to clean out and organize the other office, while at the same time maintaining administrative order in Portland, the state’s largest and busiest courthouse.

The Chief Justice observed, “One of the highlights of my year is to read the nominations submitted for these awards. Each year we can only recognize a handful of Judicial Branch employees for their public service, but the ones we recognize also represent their

peers, their fellow nominees and colleagues. These are the people who understand that serving the public is a privilege. For members of the public coming to court, the experiences of filing or defending a case, being a witness, or contesting a traffic summons, can often be a stressful experience. I am proud of the Judicial Branch employees who serve the public with respect, helpfulness and efficiency each and every day. The employees recognized today by the Court and their fellow employees exemplify the public service provided by so many wonderful employees in the Judicial Branch, and I thank them for their public service. ”