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James M. Biernat Jr., Chief Judge
16th Judicial Circuit Court,
Macomb County Probate Court,
42nd District Courts

News



For Immediate Release

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Chief Judge Biernat transfers Adult Drug Court Docket to Judge Toia



Effective April 1, 2017, Chief Judge James M. Biernat Jr. will be transferring his Adult Drug Court docket to Judge Joseph Toia. During his 6 years presiding over this specialty court docket, Judge Biernat has given countless hours to the program and successfully graduated many participants. Due to the additional responsibilities he now has as Chief Judge of the 16th Circuit, Macomb Probate and 42nd District Courts, he is transferring his docket to Judge Toia, who also has a dedicated interest in problem solving courts. Judge Toia is currently serving as Alternate Judge for the Drug Court dockets, as well as the Alternate Judge for Judge Mark Switalski in the Veterans' Treatment Court. He is eager to now begin with his own docket.

“I have truly enjoyed my time with the Drug Court” said Chief Judge James Biernat Jr. “I have had the opportunity to see many individuals work hard and transform their lives by attaining sobriety, finding gainful employment and even being unified with their families and children. I have worked with an amazing drug court team that have made the successes possible and look forward to continuing to work with them on a smaller scale as an Alternate Judge for the program. I am confident the docket will be in great hands with Judge Toia and will continue to have many successes.”

Judge Joseph Toia was appointed to the Circuit Court bench on August 10, 2015 by Governor Rick Snyder and was re-elected in November 2016. He graduated from Wayne State University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration/ Finance degree and received his Juris Doctorate from Detroit College of Law (now known as Michigan State College of Law). Prior to his appointment, Judge Toia was in private practice for 31 years. Additionally, he served as the prosecuting attorney for Orion Township in Oakland County.

“I have had an interest in problem-solving court programs since their inception. After taking the Bench, I have participated in training conferences and workshops on legal and constitutional issues affecting drug courts and to learn about advances in specialty court programs. Adult Drug Court and Veterans' Treatment Court are programs that truly make a difference not only for the individual participants, but also for our community as a whole. I look forward to continuing the good work Judge Biernat has done with the Adult Drug Court and will strive to continue

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implementing best practices to improve outcomes for our Court, the community and the participants,” said Judge Toia.

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