

Washington State Bar Association

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Judge Darvin J. Zimmerman Receives WSBA Local Hero Award

(SEATTLE) — The Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) has presented Judge **Darvin J. Zimmerman** with its Local Hero Award, in recognition of his work in establishing the Clark County Veterans Therapeutic Court. The Local Hero Award is given to those who have made noteworthy contributions to their communities. WSBA President **Michele Radosevich** presented the award at a luncheon in Vancouver on Friday, March 8, attended by members of the WSBA Board of Governors and local attorneys and judges. Judge Zimmerman was nominated by the Clark County Bar Association.

The Clark County Veterans Court helps vets who are facing combat-related trauma and have entered the criminal justice system for low-level offenses. War-related illnesses contribute to escalated suicide attempts, arrests, incarceration, divorce, domestic violence, homelessness and despair. The court's specialized treatment program helps address those issues. Clark County has an estimated 38,700 veterans. Instead of going to jail, the court program requires most offenders to plead guilty to the misdemeanor crime and undergo intense supervision and treatment for a minimum of a year.

Judge Zimmerman presided over the Veterans Court from its creation in March 2011 until July 2012, when Judge **James Swanger** took over as presiding judge. Judge Zimmerman has given hundreds of hours of his time by promoting the court to the public and working to create community involvement.

"Without Judge Zimmerman, the current Veterans Court would not be what it is today, nor as successful," said **Laura L. Mancuso**, secretary of the Veterans Therapeutic Court Advisory Board. "He has shown a determined commitment and [put] tireless efforts into supporting the advisory board by organizing and promoting fundraising events throughout 2011 and 2012 as well as... 2013." The funds raised by the Advisory Board help offset costs for peer mentors and other projects approved by the Board.

Since his election as a judge more than 25 years ago, Judge Zimmerman has volunteered his time as a coach and youth official and has served over 15 years as a hospice volunteer. In 2011, he was the judicial recipient of the WSBA Access to Justice Judicial Leadership Award for his work in establishing and supporting the Clark County Homeless Court. He currently takes a group of volunteers to one of the shelters each month, where they prepare food and feed the homeless.

About the Washington State Bar Association

The WSBA is part of the judicial branch and is authorized by the Washington State Supreme Court to license the state's 35,400 lawyers. The WSBA both regulates lawyers under the authority of the Court and serves its members as a professional association — all without public funding. The WSBA's mission is to serve the public and the members of the Bar, ensure the integrity of the legal profession, and to champion justice.

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