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LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE GOES TO PRESIDING GLENDALE JUDGE

Glendale, Ariz. — Glendale’s presiding judge Elizabeth Finn received the Saguaro Award: Lifetime Achievement during the Arizona Coalition Against Domestic Violence’s annual Thrive Gala and Awards Dinner.

The award recognizes a person’s lifetime dedication to ending domestic violence. Judge Finn received the award based on her dedication to the anti-domestic violence movement, her experience in survivor centered advocacy for victims and their children, the length and level of involvement she has participated in domestic violence advocacy, her help in resolving both the micro and macro level issues faced by Arizona’s victims, her leadership in ending violence against women and her commitment to social justice.

Judge Finn was nominated for the award by Glendale Vice Mayor Yvonne Knaack, who stated, “Judge Finn’s work as a faculty member in more than 50 training conferences over the past 20 years, combined with her involvement in New Judge Orientation since 1986, has made her the best known training judge in the State of Arizona as well as the State’s recognized judicial expert on domestic violence law. She has educated judges, attorneys, victims, lawyers, probation officers, court staff and students on behalf of the Supreme Court, the State Bar of Arizona and many other organizations. For her long-standing commitment to confronting domestic violence on so many fronts, Judge Finn is deserving of the Sahuaro Lifetime Achievement Award.”

Judge Finn, has been a judge for 34 years and is the most senior judge in the State. Throughout her career on the bench, she has devoted herself to improving judicial responses to domestic violence issues and collaborating with all levels of court stakeholders to maximize the resources and efficiencies necessary to reduce the impact of domestic violence in our communities. Judge Finn has written many successfully funded grants for the Arizona Supreme Court, police, prosecutors and the advocacy community for domestic violence survivors over the past three decades. She is known for identifying the needs of the community, bringing collaborators into the discussion and implementing innovative solutions reaching beyond the boundaries of the court. Judge Finn is a founding member and past chair of the Arizona Supreme Court Committee on the Impact of Domestic Violence and the primary author of the first Arizona Protective Order Benchbook. She has also chaired the Supreme Court Committee mandating all protective order forms and is a member of the O’Connor House Avon Project for Women and Justice.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARD
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In addition, Judge Finn implemented a specialized problem-solving Domestic Violence Treatment Court in Glendale. Since 2004, all persons convicted of domestic violence crimes in Glendale City Court have been required to attend the Domestic Violence Treatment Court. This specialized court monitors about 800 domestic violence offenders per month. This court follows a problem-solving approach similar to the DUI and Drug Court models in Maricopa County Superior Court. Last year, 314 defendants completed all Treatment Court program requirements to reach successful graduation.

Another alternative court program conceived by Judge Finn is Glendale City Court's Supervised Probation Review Docket where the Maricopa County Adult Probation Department provides felony-level supervision of Glendale City Court's misdemeanor domestic violence offenders with one prior conviction. A specialized probation/surveillance officer team has created a monthly review calendar for these domestic violence offenders, and noncompliant defendants are ordered to perform community service at the Glendale Memorial Park Cemetery.

Judge Finn has worked extensively with the Supreme Court at the legislature improving domestic violence laws. In 1998, she helped obtain legislative funding to provide the supervised probation model for limited jurisdiction courts by the Maricopa County Adult Probation Department. She helped implement the legislation by drafting specialized domestic violence probation terms. During the last legislative session, Judge Finn successfully testified in support of a bill to maintain the confidentiality of protected information provided by plaintiffs when seeking protective orders.

As Presiding Judge in Glendale, Judge Finn founded the Glendale Domestic Violence Task Force and has served as chair since its formation in 2003. The task force meets monthly to address and improve service delivery to victims, identify meaningful collaborative projects and to hold offenders accountable. Under her direction, the task force has vigorously pursued federal grant money to identify and develop programs and services to aid domestic violence victims and bolster the innovative practices of Task Force agencies. Since 2005, the task force has been awarded \$1.5 million in grants from the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women to fund activities such as a full-time high-lethality domestic violence victim advocate; a full-time protective order service coordinator; a bilingual court-based victim advocate for the Glendale Domestic Violence Task Force's nonprofit partner agency, A New Leaf, and on-call judicial coverage over the lunch hour to hear contested protective order matters.

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