

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**December 10, 2025**

### **Christel Duff Receives The Court Of Chancery's Annual Award For Attorney Ad Litem Service To The Court**

The Court of Chancery honored Attorney Christel Duff on November 17, 2025, for her service as an attorney ad litem in guardianship matters.

Attorneys ad litem are attorneys appointed by the Court of Chancery in guardianship cases to represent the best interests of persons with disabilities. They provide an immeasurable benefit to the court, working largely behind the scenes without meaningful compensation for their efforts in sensitive matters affecting the personal rights of Delawareans. Given the invaluable role of attorneys ad litem, the court determined in 2022 to annually honor an attorney ad litem who has gone above and beyond in service to the court. The past three award winners are Lawrence Lee Wentz (2022), Nora J. Crawford (2023), and Gregory Birney (2024).

This year's winner, Christel Duff, became certified as an attorney ad litem in 2024, and distinguished herself early as a person willing to go above and beyond. She is associated with The Law Office of Bonnie M. Benson, P.A., in Sussex County. She was nominated by Sr. Magistrate Molina for her efforts during a contested guardianship. As Sr. Magistrate Molina explained: "Ms. Duff faced the daunting prospect of her first attorney ad litem assignment turning into a contested case. But she did not shy away. She provided exemplary service to the person with a disability and this Court. Her service deserves recognition and praise."

Chancellor Kathaleen St. J. McCormick also thanked Ms. Duff for her service. "One of the wonderful realities of practicing law in Delaware is that attorneys, even attorneys new to a practice area, can earn name recognition and the respect of the court based on excellent representation," Chancellor McCormick explained. "That is what Ms. Duff has done, and we are grateful."

Ms. Duff thanked the court and its staff for the award and their service. She also thanked her mentors. "One can step out with confidence when they know the strength and support of the team that is with them. That is certainly the case here as I entered my first appointment knowing I had Denise Nordheimer, Timothy Ferry, Carolyn de Bernard, and Lee Wentz at my side. I cannot say enough about the help and support they have provided to me as mentors as I have begun my journey as an AAL," said Ms. Duff.

The court certifies attorneys ad litem through an annual training held virtually each fall and recorded for persons seeking to gain certification off cycle. Persons interested in serving in this capacity can contact Renee Kinsey at [j.renee.kinsey@delaware.gov](mailto:j.renee.kinsey@delaware.gov) for more information.