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For Immediate Release

Fourth Judicial District Judge James T. Swenson to Receive Foundation for Improvement of Justice Award

Minneapolis (July 31, 2007) – Assistant Chief Judge James T. Swenson of the Fourth Judicial District will receive the Foundation for Improvement of Justice 2007 Paul H. Chapman Award at an awards banquet in Atlanta, Georgia, on September 22, 2007. Judge Swenson is recognized for his proven work in Family Court by promoting early resolution of cases involving children and families through strategies such as Early Case Management, and financial and social Early Neutral Evaluation (ENE) programs.

At an Initial Case Management Conference (ICMC), the Court may recommend that the parties and their attorneys participate in the financial ENE process if they have one or more outstanding financial issues. If the parties have neutral information, the expectation is that they will be better able to reach an early settlement before their financial resources are expended on litigation.

Social ENE is a short-term, confidential evaluative process designed to facilitate prompt dispute resolution in Family Court custody and parenting time (visitation) matters.

Both of these programs are a major component in expediting the process of resolving Family Court cases. Moreover, because of ENE's proven success within Hennepin County, other jurisdictions throughout Minnesota and other states are replicating it.

This year the Foundation will recognize seven individuals / organizations / programs who have successfully proven improvement in the judicial system.

The State of Minnesota's Fourth Judicial District serves only Hennepin County and is the state's largest trial court with more than 750,000 cases received annually. The mission of the Fourth Judicial District is to provide a system of justice that assures equal access for the fair and timely resolution of cases and controversies.

For more information, visit the website at www.mncourts.gov/district/4/.