



MEDIA ADVISORY

New York State
Unified Court System
Hon. Jonathan Lippman
Chief Administrative Judge

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Community Heroes Honored on Law Day 2005

Law Day 2005, whose theme this year is “The American Jury: We the People in Action,” will be commemorated at the New York State Court of Appeals by **Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye**, **Attorney General Eliot Spitzer**, **Lieutenant Governor Mary O. Donohue** and New York State Bar Association President **Kenneth G. Standard**, along with the six Associate Justices of the Court of Appeals.

As part of the day’s celebration, **Chief Administrative Judge Jonathan Lippman** will present five individuals with the 2005 Merit Performance Award, the highest honor bestowed upon employees of the New York court system, for their outstanding contributions in the areas of community service, superior work performance, educational outreach and heroism. This year’s winners include two court officers who rescued an infant and other residents from a burning apartment complex despite great peril to their own lives; a chief clerk whose extraordinary professional dedication went beyond the call of duty as she battled cancer; a court officer-lieutenant who is both an educator and role model to local youth; and a law clerk who has helped Sudanese refugees in his community rebuild their lives, as well as spearheading local initiatives to serve seniors and low-income families.

The Law Day program will be followed at 2:00 by the first of a series of town hall meetings being held across the state on the topic of jury service, which are intended to engage citizens in a dialogue about the American jury and increase public awareness about the importance of jury service. The meeting will include representatives of the judiciary, community and business leaders, students and the media and will be led by Mark C. Zauderer, a state bar leader who chaired the Chief Judge’s Commission on the Jury.

WHEN: **Friday, April 29, at 12:30 p.m.**

WHERE: Court of Appeals
20 Eagle Street, Albany, NY

AWARD RECIPIENTS:

- **Otsego:** Gloria Chandler, Chief Clerk and Commissioner of Jurors, Otsego County Supreme and County Courts
- **Nassau:** Gary Diesel and Gregory Gerner, Court Officers, Nassau County District Court
- **Syracuse:** Carl Oropallo, Principal Law Clerk, Onondaga County Supreme Court
- **Brooklyn:** Tawya Young, Lieutenant, Kings County Civil Court