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Judges Honored for Examples of Excellence in Idaho's Courts

Three judges from across Idaho were recognized this week for their contributions to Idaho's court system.

Seventh District Judge Steven Boyce received the **George C. Granata Jr. Professionalism Award**, which honors a magistrate, district or senior judge who has gone above and beyond to ensure all Idahoans have access to fair and efficient justice.

Fifth District Judge Eric Wildman received the **Douglas D. Kramer Award**, which recognizes excellence in judicial administration through demonstrated character and action.

Both annual awards are named after former judges who were highly regarded for their approach to judicial service.

The state Magistrate Judges Association presented **Canyon County Magistrate Judge Debra Orr** with its **Legacy Award**, created to recognize a judge's dedicated and noteworthy leadership and service to their community, colleagues and citizens.

The awards were presented at an annual judicial conference in Boise.

Judge Boyce is a native of eastern Idaho who has enjoyed a broad legal career. As an attorney, he worked in both criminal prosecution and defense and specialized on the civil side in real estate and bankruptcy law. As a judge, he has served at both the magistrate and district levels and currently hears cases in Fremont, Madison and Teton counties.

Judge Boyce was recognized for building respect for the judicial system through his steady and fair presence in the courtroom. Those who nominated him described him as calm and open-minded. They noted that jurors in recent high-profile cases the judge has handled said observing him restored their faith in the rule of law. Judge Boyce said he was honored to receive the award and encouraged other judges from across the state that they are just as capable of handling complex cases. "We are the final backstop of justice," he said. "You have to make decisions based in the law."

Judge Wildman began his career as a law clerk in the district he now serves. As an attorney his work included supporting the state water court based in Twin Falls. When a judge overseeing that court retired, Wildman applied for the vacancy and became a district judge. He has served as a judge for 14 years now — hearing all water adjudication cases statewide, presiding over two treatment courts, managing his district as its administrative judge and handling a regular district court calendar.

People around Judge Wildman highlighted his leadership, his legal knowledge and the time and consideration he shows those who seek his guidance. They described him as a problem-solver with a passion for both the law and the public he serves. “What I do, it has been my passion,” Judge Wildman said while accepting his award.

Judge Orr marked 20 years on the bench this year. A former public defender and private attorney, she has spent her entire legal career in Canyon County and has become a valued mentor for newer judges across the state. She helped establish the Canyon County DUI Court in 2010 and presided over it until 2023 on top of a significant regular caseload.

Those who nominated Judge Orr described her as the first to arrive at the courthouse each morning and the last to leave each night. They lauded both her work ethic and the care she shows for her peers. Accepting her award and reflecting on her career, Judge Orr said, “I have enjoyed every minute of it.”

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