

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 11, 2011

**ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT APPOINTS LONGTIME DECATUR
ATTORNEY AS CIRCUIT JUDGE**

The Illinois Supreme Court announced Tuesday that Thomas E. Griffith, Jr., an attorney for 25 years, has been appointed a circuit judge in the Sixth Judicial Circuit.

Mr. Griffith was appointed to fill the Circuit Court vacancy created by the November 3, 2010 retirement of Judge Theodore E. Paine. The appointment is effective February 4, 2011 and will expire December 3, 2012.

Justice Rita B. Garman recommended the appointment of Mr. Griffith after a review process by a special citizen screening committee. The committee unanimously recommended Mr. Griffith to fill the at-large circuit court vacancy.

Mr. Griffith graduated *cum laude* from Millikin University with a B.A. degree in History. He received his *juris doctor* degree from Tulsa University Law School in 1985. Before his appointment to the bench, Mr. Griffith worked for 23 years as a partner with the law firm of Erickson, Davis, Murphy, Johnson, Griffith & Walsh, Ltd. in Decatur.

From 1985 to 1987, Mr. Griffith served as Macon County assistant state's attorney. He has been a member of the Capital Litigation Trial Bar since September 2002.

A resident of Decatur, Mr. Griffith is married with four children.

Justice Garman's special screening committee, which reviewed the candidates, consisted of four non-lawyers and three lawyers.

The non-lawyer members were: Chairperson Dr. Paula Finn of Decatur; Champaign resident Dr. Lawrence Jeckel, M.D.; and Decatur residents Ronald Drane and Peggy Smith Luy.

The lawyers on the committee were: Heidi R. Balsley and Richard L. Heavner of Decatur; and Randall Rosenbaum of Champaign.

MORE

**Supreme Court Appoints Thomas Griffith to Vacancy
Add One**

The Sixth Judicial Circuit is comprised of six counties: Champaign, DeWitt, Douglas, Macon, Moultrie and Piatt.

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(FOR MORE INFORMATION, please contact Joseph Tybor, press secretary to the Illinois Supreme Court, at 312-793-2323).