

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 10, 2003

**ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT ASSIGNS HISPANIC JUDGE TO
APPELLATE COURT**

The Supreme Court of Illinois announced Monday the assignment of Circuit Court Judge Rodolfo Garcia to sit on the Illinois Appellate Court.

Judge Garcia will be assigned to the position formerly held by the Honorable David Cerda, who retired. Judge Cerda was the first Hispanic to sit on the Illinois Appellate Court; Judge Garcia will be the second.

Judge Garcia, a University of Chicago Law School graduate, will be sworn in to his new position March 20 by Chief Justice Mary Ann G. McMorrow at the annual dinner of the Hispanic Lawyers Association of Illinois and the Hispanic Lawyers Scholarship Fund of Illinois.

The dinner will be held at the Westin River North Hotel, 320 N. Dearborn in Chicago with a reception beginning at 6 p.m. Phil Ponce, co-host of Chicago Tonight on WTTW-TV, will be the featured speaker at the dinner.

Judge Garcia sat in the Criminal Division of the Circuit Court of Cook County from April 1997 to the present, handling some of the most serious cases. He became a Circuit Court Judge in December 1996.

After completing law school, Judge Garcia, 50, served in the Illinois Attorney General's Office as an assistant attorney general in the criminal appeals division. He opened law offices under his name in 1983 and concentrated his practice in criminal, immigration and family law.

In addition to the University of Chicago Law School, Judge Garcia attended the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business as a part-time evening student; is a graduate of the University of Illinois at Urbana with a concentration in economics; and graduated from Proviso East High School in Maywood.