

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 5, 2001

**JUSTICE GARMAN TO GIVE KEYNOTE ADDRESS AT AWARDS BANQUET**

Justice Rita B. Garman of the Illinois Supreme Court will be the featured speaker at the YWCA Women of Excellence Dinner in Springfield Thursday, September 6. The event will be held at the Renaissance Hotel in Springfield.

Hosted by the YWCA of Springfield, this fifth annual dinner event recognizes women in the Springfield area who have made significant contributions to the community or who have extraordinary career accomplishments.

The event starts at 5 p.m. with dinner being served at 6:30 p.m. The Springfield Renaissance is located at 701 E. Adams Street.

Justice Garman will give the keynote address.

Justice Garman is a pioneer in breaking down women's professional barriers in college, law school and in the Illinois judiciary. She became the second woman to sit on the Illinois Supreme Court, joining Justice Mary Ann G. McMorrow from Cook County.

Justice Garman, 57, has sat on the bench in Illinois for more than a quarter of a century: first as an associate judge from 1974 to 1986, then a Circuit Court judge from 1986 to 1995 when she was appointed to the Appellate Court from the Fourth Judicial District. She was elected to the appellate seat in 1996. She holds the Supreme Court seat from the Fourth District, which is composed of 30 counties across central Illinois.

Justice Garman was one of a handful of women in the College of Commerce of the University of Illinois when she graduated in the Top 10 of her class, and was named to the Bronze Tablet. She attended the College of Law, University of Iowa where she received her Juris Doctor degree with distinction in 1968.

Following graduation from law school, Justice Garman began her legal career serving indigent clients with the Legal Aid Society. She later worked with the Vermilion County State's Attorney's office, and was in private practice for a year before becoming an associate judge.

As a judge, she played a prominent role in judicial education. She has served as faculty at numerous seminars and programs for Illinois judges and has been a member and chairperson of the Education Committee of the Illinois Judicial Conference, which drafted the Comprehensive Judicial Education Plan for Illinois Judges.

**(For more information: Contact Jennifer Wrightam of the YWCA at 217/522-8828 or Joseph Tybor, press secretary of the Illinois Supreme Court, at 312/793-2323)**