

NEWS RELEASE

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Retiring Court Staff Honoured by Ontario's Chief Justices

Maurice Anderson, who was employed by the Ministry of the Attorney General at the 361 University Avenue Courthouse for 9 years until his retirement last December, received the Chief Justices' Award recognizing his exceptional contributions to justice education in the province.

In his 9 years there, Mr. Anderson was responsible for coordinating school groups - up to 5 or 6 bus loads per day - that visited to observe the justice system in action and see a vital part of Canadian democracy up close. All told, nearly 135,000 students passed through the doors of 361 University Avenue Courthouse and were welcomed by Maurice Anderson.

Not only did he coordinate with the 500 teachers who routinely bring their classes to the courthouse, insuring there were never so many students as to overwhelm the business of the courts, he provided them with information about the trials that were proceeding each day and when possible, the stage the proceedings had reached. He recruited judges, Crown attorney and Masters to meet with the students, participating in Question and Answer sessions with them every morning.

As well as the daily class visits, he also coordinated student mock trial tournaments, the annual Take Your Grade Nine Child to Work Day and numerous special events for young people in the courthouse. He did all of this with a quiet competence and cheerful enthusiasm that earned him the respect of teachers, students and justice professionals alike.

The Chief Justices' Award is an annual award of the Ontario Justice Education Network. In previous years it has been presented to judges, lawyers, teachers and court staff who have made significant contributions to the field of justice education. Maurice Anderson is its 10th recipient. It was presented to him at a ceremony on March 25th led by Chief Justice for Ontario, George Strathy, Chief Justice of the Superior Court of Ontario, Heather Forster Smith and then Associate Chief Justice of the Ontario Court of Justice, Lise Maisonneuve.

The Ontario Justice Education Network is a not-for-profit charitable organization established in 2002 to promote meaningful exchanges between youth, both within the school system and in the community, and justice sector professionals. Going beyond simply providing information about the justice system, OJEN's programs provide learning opportunities that open the possibility for developing new perspectives and skills to become engaged citizens and to better manage conflict in one's life.