



Chicago Appleseed
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Chicago Appleseed Fund For Justice Aims To Educate Illinois Voters On This Year's Judicial Candidates Running For Re-Election With VoteForJudges.org Campaign

On November 4, the voting public will have the power to decide which of over 70 judges running for retention should remain on the bench. It's easier than ever to educate yourself on their qualifications by visiting: www.VoteForJudges.org. This voter education site offers non-partisan evaluations and recommendations, provided by over a dozen bar associations, on each of these judges.

Chicago, IL (October 1, 2008) --- VoteForJudges.org, a program run by Chicago Appleseed Fund for Justice, is a non-partisan group dedicated to providing voter education for the upcoming judicial elections. On November 4, voters will be asked to decide whether or not over 70 judges running for re-election should remain on the bench. VoteForJudges.org makes it easier than ever to educate yourself on the qualifications of these judges by providing voters with over a dozen different bar associations' evaluations and recommendations, as well as the recommendations from newspapers and other publications.

Judges have a profound impact on all of our lives. Every day they make important decisions on fundamental issues such as education, housing, healthcare, divorce, and custody hearings. Since judges make fundamental decisions ranging from personal matters to broader social issues, it's vital that the public elects judges that are qualified and free from political and economic influence. Unfortunately, many voters don't know anything about the prospective judges running for retention. Some voters will simply guess or make partisan-based decisions.

Therefore, VoteForJudges.org wants voters to know that on November 4, they have the power to ensure that only qualified judges are retained to make decisions that will affect them, their families and their communities. By visiting the site, voters can review and download the non-partisan evaluations and recommendations provided by over a dozen bar associations, newspapers, and other publications.

Evaluations of the candidates were based on a variety of factors including: Fairness, legal competence, integrity, knowledge of the law, judicial temperament, impartiality and professional conduct. No consideration was given for political affiliation.

"It's vital to the health of our judicial system that the voting public elects only qualified judges," noted Malcolm Rich, Executive Director of Chicago Appleseed Fund for Justice. "By taking just



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15 minutes out of their day to review the information provided on the website, voters can be confident that they are making an informed decision in the ballot booth. “

VoteForJudges.org provides voters with the following information:

- Non-partisan, judicial evaluation and recommendation results from the members of the Alliance of Bar Associations for Judicial Screening, the Chicago Bar Association, Chicago Council of Lawyers, and the North Suburban Bar Coalition.
- Sample ballot from the Committee to Elect Qualified Judges that can be taken into polling booths
- Judicial evaluation charts & information on the individual candidates
- Information and recommendations from newspapers and other publications.

Vote smart! Educate yourself before you vote. Visit www.VoteForJudges.org for more information.

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About Chicago Appleseed Fund for Justice

Chicago Appleseed Fund for Justice is an impact research, education and advocacy organization that works to achieve fundamental, systemic reform by addressing policies and practices that relate to social justice and government effectiveness issues. Chicago Appleseed is part of a national network of public interest law centers working through and with Appleseed in Washington, D.C. We focus on issues ranging from fair criminal justice systems to equal access in financial institutions. For more information, please visit: www.chicagoappleseed.org or call: 312.988.6565

About VoteForJudges.org

VoteForJudges.org is a project of the Chicago Appleseed Fund for Justice and is supported by many non-profit community organizations dedicated to providing voter education for the upcoming judicial elections. Information on individuals running for judgeships or retention is gathered by lawyers and bar groups using interviews with the candidates themselves as well as examining their prior experience and temperament. **VoteForJudges.org** then provides that information in an easily accessible, user-friendly format on the website. The website also includes links to sample ballots that can be printed and carried into the voting booth.

The logo for Vote for Judges.org features a red checkmark inside a blue square, followed by the text "Vote for Judges.org" in a blue sans-serif font.



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