

NEWS FROM:

Supreme Court of Tennessee Administrative Office of the Courts

Internet Home Page: www.tncourts.gov

Elizabeth Sykes, Director
Tim Townsend, Deputy Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 27, 2006

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT
Sue Allison (615) 532-6047

Memphis Judge Named to American Bar Association Commission

Circuit Court Judge Robert L. Childers of Memphis has been appointed to another term on an American Bar Association commission created to assist lawyers and other legal professionals with addictions, mental health issues and other personal problems that impact their ability to practice law.

ABA President Karen Mathis asked Childers to serve on the Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs (CoLAP). The commission's goal is to educate the legal community about impairments and the assistance available to lawyers. It also provides support to state lawyer assistance programs.

Childers has served on the commission or its advisory commission since 2000. He previously served as chair of the Law School Assistance Committee and currently serves as chair of the Judicial Assistance Committee for CoLAP.

"Only in the past two decades has the legal community recognized the importance of these programs," Childers said. "Until the lawyer assistance programs were created, attorneys with impairment problems often were reluctant to seek help. In some cases, their practices were affected, as well as their personal lives."

Childers is a member of the commission for the Tennessee Lawyers Assistance Program (TLAP). TLAP provides consultation, assessment, referral, intervention and other services for lawyers, judges, bar applicants and law students with issues such as substance abuse, stress, family problems, depression, gambling and eating disorders. The program was created by the Tennessee Supreme Court in 1999. From its inception through August, 2006, there have been more than 1,500 inquiries and referrals.

"I am proud to have been an original commission member for TLAP," Childers said. "The good the program does, not only for lawyers, but for the public as well, is impossible to quantify. The same is true for similar programs in every other state."