

John S. Lowry
Chief Judge



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Press Release

17th CIRCUIT COURT CELEBRATES NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY

(ROCKFORD, IL) – On Saturday, November 22, 2025, the Seventeenth Circuit Court celebrated its 21st annual National Adoption Day Celebration at the Winnebago County Criminal Justice Center. At this event, Judge Francis M. Martinez along with Circuit Clerk Tom Klein, local social service agencies (Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, Youth Services Bureau, Brightpoint and Camelot Care Center) and other court personnel volunteered their time to finalize 17 adoptions of children previously residing in foster care.

National Adoption Day is a collective national effort to raise awareness of the estimated 90,000 children in foster care that are ready for adoption and waiting for a family. On this day, members of the judiciary, attorneys and social service agency professionals from all across the United States work together to finalize adoptions and celebrate all of the families participating in adoptions. Over the last twenty-one years, a total of 467 children have been adopted into permanent loving families in celebration of National Adoption Day in the 17th Circuit Court of Illinois.

Chief Judge John S. Lowry stated, “It is a great privilege to play a role in creating permanent, loving homes for the children and families involved in National Adoption Day. Today is truly a day of celebration.” Judge Erin Buhl added, “National Adoption Day is an exciting day full of new beginnings and I am honored to join our families, caseworkers, CASA volunteers and court personnel in celebration.” Judge Francis M. Martinez stated, “Today we participate in creating forever families for children previously in the Juvenile Court system. It is a joyous day.”

For more information about this event, please contact Deputy Court Administrator Kimberly Ackmann at 815-319-4831 or kackmann@17thcircuit.illinoiscourts.gov

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