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Pinellas-Pasco Circuit Judge Jack Helinger Honored by Bar Association

CLEARWATER - On Thursday, June 5, 2025, Pinellas-Pasco Circuit Judge Jack Helinger, who currently presides over a family division, was presented the 2025 Judicial Appreciation Award by the St. Petersburg Bar Association (SPBA) at its installation and leadership celebration hosted at the James Museum in St. Petersburg.

Annually, a jurist is selected to receive the award based upon nominations submitted by bar members to the SPBA Board of Directors. Among the factors considered are a nominee's courtroom demeanor, his or her judicial experience, helpfulness to lawyers and litigants, and activities off the bench that promote the administration of justice and civic participation.

Other judges in the Sixth Judicial Circuit who have been given this award in the past include Doneene Loar, Kimberly Todd, Marion Fleming, Michael Andrews, Thomas Ramsberger, and Lorraine Kelly. Judge Helinger had previously been given the award in 2012.

According to his nomination, Judge Helinger has led the way when it comes to trauma-informed courts, with its emphasis on taking into account adverse childhood experiences. He has spent countless hours educating attorneys, guardian ad litem, and judges, both locally and across the state, about this sympathetic approach.

In addition, he has historically been active in the St. Petersburg Bar Association, leading the St. Pete Florida Law Study Group each month to review current family law cases. And, as past president of the bar association, he has routinely attended bar events offering guidance to young attorneys and law students.

News of Judge Helinger's most recent award comes two months after he was given the 2024 Jurist of the Year award by the Florida Chapter of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers (AAML). Among other things, the chapter cited 11 day-long workshops Judge Helinger has given on trauma in families. He served as a liaison between the Florida Bar Association's Family Law section and the Office of the State Courts Administrator, helping to develop the curriculum and training volunteers to serve as workshop leaders.

Judge Helinger was appointed to the bench in 2008..



Judge Jack Helinger, at the June 5 event