

Recognition Ceremony for The Honorable Judge James L. Kimbler

By Kate Feeks

A recognition ceremony was held for Judge James L. Kimbler. He is currently the longest serving jurist sitting in Medina County. He was elected to the Medina County Court of Common Pleas in 1996. Prior to being elected as a common pleas judge, Judge Kimbler served as judge of the Wadsworth Municipal Court from 1986 to 1996.

The ceremony was held on Friday December 19th at the Medina County Courthouse. The courtroom was filled with friends, colleagues and, of course, his wife, Joyce Kimbler. Joyce Kimbler has recently been elected to succeed Judge Kimbler as Medina County Common Pleas Judge.

Attorney John Celebrezze, Co-Founder of the Celebrezze -Zanghi Community Legal Education Project, Inc., opened the celebration by welcoming all the guests, including United States Senator Sherrod Brown.

Sherrod Brown was born and raised in Mansfield, Ohio where he attended the local public schools. The Senator has earned a reputation as an independent voice for ordinary Ohioans and middle-class families in the U.S. Senate and at his previous position as an Ohio Congressman.

“I met Judge Kimbler in 1976, we are long-time friends. Judge Kimbler is a public servant with a capital P and S for all the great things he has done for this community” Brown stated.

“He made it a mission to better this community. That is why the work that Jim Kimbler did for 29 years is so important. He devoted his life to serving Medina County and his unwavering commitment to equality under the law should serve as an example to all judges and lawyers.” Brown said.

Senator Brown continued to discuss all the accomplishments of Judge Kimbler while serving as judge. He expressed how fortunate Medina County has been to have such a respected judge whose values and professionalism were so well suited for the job. Brown said he is confident that Joyce Kimbler will continue that same legacy when she is sworn in to serve next month.

Brown ended the ceremony by presenting Judge Kimbler with a certificate and plaque wishing the Judge and Joyce all the very best.

Following the ceremony Mr. Celebrezze stated that the Celebrezze-Zanghi Community Legal Education Project (CZ) plans to offer a scholarship in the name of Judge Kimbler to a high school student pursuing a career in law. He mentioned that the CZ Board of Directors while endorsing the James L. Kimbler scholarship further plans to offer similar scholarships.

Mr. Celebrezze also said he has asked Judge Kimbler to return to *Law Talk*, CZ's cable production to discuss current legal issues and his plans for the future. "Judge Kimbler is one of the strongest advocates of legal education that I have ever met." stated Celebrezze.