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NEWS RELEASE



Justice Initiatives is proud to be recognized by Harvard's Kennedy School as a 2017 'Bright Idea' in Government.

May 10, 2017

Maura Chavez Named 2017 Raising the Bar Award Winner

Charlotte, NC – Justice Initiatives, Inc. (JI) has named Mrs. Maura E. Chavez as the recipient of the 2017 Raising the Bar award.

Maura worked with the Trial Court Administrator's (TCA) office at the Mecklenburg County Courthouse before joining the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department earlier this year. She held a variety of positions in her 17-year career with the court system: Fine Collections Coordinator, Criminal Caseflow Manager, Interpreter Manager, and Community Outreach Coordinator. Maura's outreach work with the TCA's office as Community Outreach Coordinator served to promote the public's education and to foster bonds of understanding between Charlotte's populations who do not speak English as a first language and the court system. Maura speaks fluent Spanish. Her ability to bridge communication gaps in the community, coupled with her resourcefulness and knack for detail were valuable assets to the 26th judicial district in her time with court system.

Paul Cameron, WBTV Anchor and Master of Ceremonies for the Evening at the Courthouse, presented Mrs. Chavez with the award at the 11th annual event on April 27th.

Each year, this award is presented to honor a court employee who has made a significant and notable contribution to the advancement of the Mecklenburg County court system. The type of contribution made can vary. It may be related to performance, leadership, innovation, advocacy, public education or some other meritorious area related to the public good. The board of directors determines the relevancy, level of importance and degree to which each contribution has made a difference. The winner receives a check for \$1,000.00, a plaque in recognition of his or her accomplishment(s) and the permanent listing of their name in the registry of past winners.

JI was formed in 2004 by a group of civic leaders, lawyers, business owners and concerned citizens in North Carolina who understand the rule of law is the bedrock of our civilized society, that a healthy court system is critical to safeguarding this foundation, and that the effective and efficient administration of justice is essential to a strong, prosperous and vibrant community. JI develops programming to address the deficits in the public's understanding and appreciation for the rule of law and the role of courts in our republican form of government. It demonstrates the interconnectedness between each individual's quality of life and the courts' ability to fairly adjudicate legal rights. JI seeks to ensure that the judicial branch receives the funding it needs to provide timely access to justice for all and defend against policies that undermine the independence, fairness, or integrity of the courts. JI, also, raises money to use as seed funding to initiate smarter and innovative judicial programs and services that build public trust and confidence in our courts and studies new ideas about justice and our courts with academic partners.

For more information please visit www.justiceinitiatives.org or contact Alexandra Arrington, Program Coordinator, JI at 980-222-1078.