



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

People's Defender

By Paul Hannah

March 04, 2015

WEST UNION - Judge Brett Spencer of the Adams County Court of Common Pleas received an Ohio Strong Award on Friday, Feb. 27.

County officials, courthouse employees, friends, and family gathered in Courtroom One to watch Judge Spencer receive the award from Jared Borg, representing State Treasurer Josh Mandel.

Normally the Ohio Strong Award is given to individuals who work in manufacturing and skilled trades in order to raise public awareness and encourage more people to pursue careers in those fields, as the number of workers continues to decline. Those who excel in these careers can be nominated for the award to the Treasurer's Office.

While Judge Spencer is not in the manufacturing field, Mandel has recognized his efforts to reduce repeat criminal behavior by promoting education and employment in those that come before him.

"We started seeing some common denominators. Ninety-two percent did not have their high school education," Judge Spencer said. "At first, we ordered them to take their GED, and we expected them to come back and tell us they got their GED. Well, they came back and said they didn't, so we started putting [the classes] in the court room and putting in the conference rooms. We took over the old commissioners' office, and we put state of the art GED in there. The thing that was emphasized was professionalism. They needed to be treated as a professional."

Judge Spencer became emotional as he thanked his staff and later his family.

"I count on my staff, and I am very fond of my staff. I count on you, and you deliver every time."

Judge Spencer then discussed his plans for the future, focusing on how best to improve the job prospects of Adams County's citizens, particular those who have been repeat offenders. He mentioned his plans to have a training program through a work-release facility, for which the Adams County Commissioners are currently in the planning stages.

The Ohio Strong Award wasn't the only recognition Judge Spencer received. Lauren DeCamp, a representative from Senator Uecker's office, presented Judge Spencer with two commendations, one from the Ohio Senate and one from the General Assembly, congratulating him on receiving the Ohio Strong Award.

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