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State Public Defender Chiarkas Recognized for Outstanding Contributions to the Profession of Law

(Madison) Wisconsin State Public Defender Nicholas L. Chiarkas received the Belle Case La Follette Outstanding Professional Award during a ceremony held on May 15, 2002 at the Monona Terrace Convention Center in Madison. Wisconsin Law Foundation President John S. Skilton presented the Foundation-sponsored award.

The annual award is formally given to a lawyer who has made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of the profession. Nicholas Chiarkas was specifically recognized for his dedication to a cost efficient and effective indigent defense system as well as his many initiatives that focus on children and Wisconsin communities.

In his acceptance speech, Chiarkas remarked, "Be assured that I accept it, recognizing that I was noticed because I was sitting on the shoulders of two giants: 1) our Public Defender Board chaired by Dan Berkos; and 2) the hard working and dedicated men and women that make up the State Public Defender agency."

"Many in our society today believe that success is an individual accomplishment -- I know better. The environment in our agency, while at times challenging, is cooperative, collaborative, and supportive. It is designed on the principle that accomplishment and success are the result of teamwork and group efforts, even when it appears one is working alone," added Chiarkas.

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