



## NEWS RELEASE

<http://www.casenet.org/conference/excellence.htm>

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### ANCHORAGE CHILDREN'S COURT MASTER RECEIVES JUDGE OF THE YEAR AWARD FROM NATIONAL CASA ASSOCIATION

*Pictured L-R: Michael Piraino, National CASA CEO and Master William Hitchcock, Anchorage Children's Court*

*ANCHORAGE, April 10, 2009.* The National Association of Court-Appointed Special Advocates for Children [CASA] has honored Anchorage Children's Court Master William Hitchcock with its 2009 Judge of the Year Award. The award recognizes excellence in judicial service in cases involving abused and neglected children. Master Hitchcock has been a judicial officer with the Alaska Court System for over thirty years, and has presided over Anchorage children's court since 1985. In 1987, he was instrumental in founding Alaska's first CASA program, which provides trained volunteer advocates to work with abused and neglected children during court cases affecting their welfare. He has fostered expansion of the CASA program statewide and is active in a variety of other children's justice and juvenile justice initiatives. Master Hitchcock has received many awards over the years for his dedication to the administration of justice in children's cases, including the 2005 Commissioner's Award for Alaska from the federal Administration on Children, Youth and Families, and the 2002 Community Outreach Award from the Alaska Supreme Court. Master Hitchcock is the first Alaskan to receive the National CASA Judge of the Year award, which will be

presented on April 25, 2009, during the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual National CASA Conference in Denver. In recognition of the award, the Anchorage CASA program will pay special tribute to Master Hitchcock during its upcoming volunteer reunion on Wednesday, April 22, between 7:00 PM-8:30 PM at the BP Energy Center. ###