

# **Adoption Day celebration September 27 in Pascagoula**

September 24, 2012

The 16th Chancery Court will celebrate a special Adoption Day on September 27 at the Jackson County Courthouse in Pascagoula.

Chancery Judge Jaye Bradley expects to finalize adoptions of about 14 children.

Judge Bradley will begin hearing the adoption proceedings at 9:30 a.m. She will take up individual cases in the courtroom. Formal proceedings in any adoption case are closed to the public. No media coverage will be allowed inside the courtroom during the finalization of the adoptions.

The media is invited to a reception which will begin shortly after 9:30 a.m. on the first floor of the courthouse. The media may seek interviews with adoptive parents at the reception.

Most of the adoptive parents have been foster parents for these children. Most of the children have been adjudicated through the Youth Courts as abused or neglected, Judge Bradley said.

“These families literally save these kids’ lives,” Judge Bradley said. “To give a child a family is a tremendous gift.”

Judge Bradley said she always looks forward to presiding over adoption proceedings. “It’s always a joy for me to be a part of that final step in making that unit a family,” Judge Bradley said. “Their little faces are just beaming with happiness. It’s the best thing about my job that I do.”

This will be the fourth time Judge Bradley has presided over an Adoption Day with multiple families finalizing adoptions. The programs in the past have been scheduled later in the year. November is National Adoption Month.

Across the state, the Department of Human Services is seeking adoptive parents for more than 100 children, according to Angie McLeod Williams, Director of Permanency Planning for DHS Division of Family and Children's Services. In August, the last month for which data was available, there were 526 foster children legally free for adoption in Mississippi. Of those, 363 are living with families who plan to adopt them.

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