



**Judicial Branch of Arizona
in Maricopa County**

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Judicial Branch Celebrates Family Reunification Month
Parents Share Inspirational Stories During Virtual Event

PHOENIX (June 28, 2022) – When children are removed from their home and placed into foster care, it takes hard work and commitment from parents to regain custody and make their family whole again. In honor of those parents who have successfully reunified with their children, a coalition of government and community organizations – including the State of Arizona and the Maricopa County Superior Court – are celebrating Family Reunification Month.

Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey kicked off the month by signing a proclamation declaring June as Family Reunification Month in Arizona. Days later, on June 11, a virtual Family Reunification Day event was held, highlighting the long, challenging journey of more than 50 families who successfully reunited. The event included inspirational stories from parents who graduated from the program as well as messages from Superior Court judges, members of community organizations and government leaders including Arizona First Lady Angela Ducey.

“Families who reunify are superheroes to us. To have your child taken away and to address the circumstances that brought your child into foster care is not easy,” Juvenile Presiding Judge Joseph Kreamer said. “The Court and the Department of Child Safety are here to help reunify parents with their children. One of the most powerful things you can see in court is when a family comes back together. There are a lot of tears and a lot of joy and that’s what we are celebrating this month.”

Thousands of Arizona families reunify each year, including approximately 4,600 families in 2021. Most children in out-of-home care have a case plan goal of family reunification. To complete the reunification process, parents must work closely and maintain contact with the Court and meet regularly with attorneys and their caseworkers. They may also be required to participate in drug testing and visit with counselors.

“The reunification process is incredibly difficult. You must come to grips with a lot of things that are going on, most importantly the safety of your children. It can take months, sometimes years. But parents should keep trying and keep working because it can happen,” Judge Kreamer said.

In 2010, the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law and other national partners established June as National Reunification Month.

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The Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County is comprised of Superior Court, Adult Probation and Juvenile Probation, which includes juvenile detention. The Judicial Branch in Maricopa County is the fourth largest trial court system in the nation and, along with its 3,000 employees, is dedicated to providing a safe, fair and impartial forum for resolving disputes, enhancing access to services, and providing innovative, evidence-based practices that improve the safety of the community and ensure the public's trust and confidence in the Judicial Branch. For more information, visit www.superiorcourt.maricopa.gov.