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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Terry Goddard Presents Victims' Rights Awards to Chief Justice Ruth McGregor, Mohave County Attorney Matthew Smith

(Phoenix, Ariz. – April 29, 2009) Attorney General Terry Goddard today presented his Office's 2009 *Distinguished Service Award for Leadership* to Arizona Supreme Court Chief Justice Ruth McGregor and Mohave County Attorney Matthew Smith.

Goddard cited their vision, initiative and commitment to better the treatment of crime victims when honoring McGregor and Smith with the award at the Attorney General's annual Victims' Rights Week recognition ceremony.

Goddard recognized Chief Justice Ruth McGregor for her efforts to change Arizona courts' treatment of crime victims.

Goddard said of McGregor, "Chief Justice McGregor has re-engineered the courts' case processing systems and made case-related information available to victims on the Internet. She has increased cooperation between law enforcement, prosecutors, defense counsels and victims to improve education about victims' rights and ensure that those rights are enforced."

Goddard recognized County Attorney Matthew Smith for his work with victims of abuse cases involving the polygamous FLDS community in Colorado City. "County Attorney Smith's efforts to create trust and understanding between Colorado City victims and prosecutors have helped reluctant victims come forward to seek justice. His approach has influenced prosecutors across Arizona, Utah and other states," Goddard said of Smith.

"Chief Justice McGregor and County Attorney Smith have both shown initiative and understanding in extending improved services to victims facing personal grief and trauma," Goddard said. "Their examples continue to guide Arizona courts and prosecutors and have earned them the *Distinguished Service Award for Leadership*."

Goddard also presented Distinguished Service Recognition Awards to Dan Levey, the Governor's Office Advisor for Victims; the DOVES Program, a Phoenix-based organization serving late-life victims of domestic violence; Ama Doo Alchini Bighan, Inc. (ADABI), a domestic violence and sexual assault crisis intervention organization serving the Navajo Nation; and Lydia Johnson, the Arizona Department of Corrections Victim Notification Manager.

Yesterday in Tucson, Goddard presented the *Recognition Award for Victims' Rights* to University of Arizona undergraduates Stephanie Hopper, Emily Organ and Justin Nakajo-Kleinman as well as law students Trevor Allen, Danielle Dubois, Guadalupe Gutierrez, Nicholas Klingerman, Jean West and Kim Vanderlee. These students have put in countless volunteer hours to the Attorney General's Office as interns in the Offices of Victims Services and Attorney General's criminal prosecution section.

The Attorney General's Office is dedicated to a system of justice that is inclusive of crime victims and strives to provide the most efficient and effective service to the people of Arizona.

To reach the Attorney General's Office of Victim Services, please contact victimservices@azag.gov or (602) 542-4911. Additional information is available at the Attorney General's Office Web site, www.azag.gov.

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