One Appellate Judge has worked closely with Hinshaw & Culbertson attorney Adam Vaught to make it easier for the poor and vulnerable to access the judicial system. And during this time, the Judge discovered one important fact about Vaught:

“He is, in a word, brilliant,” The Judge said.

The Judge’s praise for Vaught doesn’t end there. The Judge said Vaught is “an astute advocate, skilled writer and keen observer. I have never thought of Adam as a relatively young lawyer; his manner and knowledge are befitting of someone far beyond his years.”

Numerous judges and attorneys agree. Vaught, during his career as a litigator and as a former counsel to the Chief Justice of the Illinois Supreme Court, has impressed people with his legal knowledge, dedication to the profession, ethics and willingness to log long hours.

Former Governor James R. Thompson, Senior Chairman and Matthew R. Carter Partner at Winston & Strawn have sought Vaught’s counsel and came away impressed. They said, “Adam’s insight into, and knowledge of, Illinois law and the Illinois judiciary is almost without equal. When we grapple with important legal issues and in particular issues that have ended up or may end up, in the Supreme Court of Illinois – Adam is a frequent Sounding Board.”

Vaught has used his abilities to help the community as well. One example is the work Vaught turned in for the Access to Justice Commission, created in May of 2012 to eliminate some of the barriers that poor and vulnerable clients face that keep them from gaining full access to the legal system.

Jeffrey Colman, a partner with Chicago’s Jenner & Block and member of the Commission, said that they rely heavily on the work of volunteer staff. One of the most important of these staffers? Vaught, who Colman says has never been shy about volunteering his time for the commission.

“Adam Vaught has been a critical partner and a wonderful asset,” Colman said. “Adam is smart, honest, personable and deeply committed to helping the least fortunate in our communities.”

Vaught played a key role in helping the Access to Justice Commission develop a legislative proposal that would establish and fund a national pilot program to create a statewide legal-assistance hotline for military personnel and veterans.

“Adam’s leadership, wise counsel and practical thinking helped the commission prepare a strong bill that, if implemented, will meaningfully improve access to justice for low-income veterans across our state,” Colman said.

Count Timothy Bertschy, managing partner of the Peoria, Illinois based law firm Heyl, Royster, Voelker & Allen, as another booster of Vaught. He worked closely with Vaught when both served on Illinois Supreme Court Chief Justice Thomas Kilbride’s judicial selection committee.

“As we discussed candidates, Adam impressed me with his insight into their strengths and weaknesses as shown by their ‘paper’ records and what Adam had come to know from his experience with the candidates and their communities,” Bertschy said. “His approach was professional and respectful of the candidates while still being fair and impartial.”

And Justice Kilbride himself said that Vaught was an invaluable counselor during the time he served as the Illinois’ Chief Justice. Kilbride pointed to the many ideas that Vaught has had to better the legal profession. For example, Vaught worked on establishing uniform e-filing standards and assisted with the establishment of cameras in the courtroom.

“He has solid, practical ideas on how to improve the process for lawyers, judges and citizens, and is willing and able to implement them,” Kilbride said.

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