
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

November 20, 2010

Ald. Robert J. Bauman
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2010 Frank P. Zeidler Award Winners Announced

Joseph and Joyce Ellwanger were contemporaries of Mayor Zeidler

The Frank P. Zeidler Public Service Award committee has selected Joseph and Joyce Ellwanger as the 2010 recipients of the award, which honors the life and work of former Milwaukee Mayor Frank Zeidler.

The Ellwangers, nominated by Father William J. Brennan, S.J. of the Milwaukee Inncity Congregations Allied for Hope (MICAH), will be honored on Tuesday, November 23 prior to the start of the regular Common Council meeting at 9 a.m. in the third floor Council Chamber at City Hall, 200 E. Wells St. Media coverage is invited.

Joseph and Joyce Ellwanger were friends and contemporaries of Mayor Zeidler, and have been committed to community organizing, public service, racial equality, social justice, and civil rights for 50 years.

A retired Lutheran pastor, Joseph Ellwanger led the Birmingham Council on Human Relations and the Concerned White Citizens of Alabama, and was active in the civil rights movement in the south, even marching beside Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and visiting the families of the children killed in the 1963 church bombing in Birmingham. Dr. King included him in a group of 15 pastors that met subsequently with President Lyndon Johnson to voice support for the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The couple moved from Alabama to Milwaukee during the late 1960s.

Joyce Ellwanger has been a staunch opponent of the U.S. Army School of the Americas at Fort Benning, Georgia (where many claim Central/Latin American military soldiers/advisers are taught and trained in immoral tactics such as torture and assassination), and served several months in federal prison after being arrested for taking part in a peaceful, nonviolent protest years ago that involved walking on fort property that is off limits to the public.

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Zeidler Public Service Award/ADD ONE

The Ellwangers have been instrumental in starting and supporting several community-support organizations in Milwaukee, including Ezekiel CDC, MICAH, and others, and also have championed successful efforts to find alternative sentencing measures that help non-violent offenders receive substance abuse treatment.

Chaired by civil rights attorney and activist Arthur Heitzer of the Frank P. Zeidler Center for Public Discussion, the selection committee is composed of Alderman Bauman (vice chair), Milwaukee historian John Gurda, and community members Shelley Bruehling and Jack Murtaugh. In 2008 Jack and Lucia Murtaugh were the recipients of the inaugural Zeidler award.

Heitzer said the couple's leadership is honorable. "From their role in the pivotal civil rights movement in the South in the 1960s, through their decades of leadership in Milwaukee, Joe and Joyce Ellwinger have been outstanding examples of what Mayor Zeidler stood for. Milwaukee would not be the same without their interfaith activism, commitment to the city and their neighborhood, helping residents transition from incarceration to positive employment, and challenging U.S. policies of intervention abroad rather than relying on peaceful means of resolution."

The award acknowledges residents whose efforts most embody the values and vision of former Mayor Zeidler. Elected public officials are not eligible to receive the honor.

Frank Zeidler, the city's last socialist mayor, died July 7, 2006 at age 93. He served as mayor from 1948 to 1960, and continued to be a voice for social justice and public service until his death.