

The National Association of Women Judges



From the Bar to the Bench

A ‘How-To’ Manual for Lawyers

Acknowledgements

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Program Objectives

Upon completion of this program, participants will:

- ✓ understand the process involved in pursuing a judgeship;
- ✓ be motivated to consider pursuing a career in the judiciary;
- ✓ be informed of the ethical issues faced by judges;
- ✓ identify activities that will increase their chances of becoming judges; and
- ✓ appreciate and understand the role of a judge.
- ✓ learn more about NAWJ

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Program Description

The purpose of this program is to inform practicing lawyers about the importance of judging, the skills and steps needed to become a judge, and life as a judge. This is a one-day program that is comprised of five sections, plus a welcome and closing sessions. (An alternative half-day program is outlined in the appendix.)

Opening: Welcome and Overview

The moderator introduces the program and the speakers, and describes briefly the program's learning objectives.

Part One: Ethical Issues & Rules for Judicial Candidates

The many ethical constraints imposed on judicial candidates regarding fundraising, campaigning, etc. are discussed by judges and bar members.

Part Two: Practical Tips on Navigating Judicial Screening Committees

Judicial candidates encounter various obstacles during the judicial screening process. The panel discusses how best to deal with screening committees.

Part Three: Keynote Speaker: From the Bar to the Bench

A prominent judge shares her experiences during her quest for a judgeship. She addresses both the challenges and triumphs of the candidacy process.

Part Four: Nuts & Bolts of Judicial Selection: View from the Bench

Distinguished judges discuss the judicial election/nomination/ appointment process. Speakers should represent all levels of the courts and should speak from personal experience.

Part Five: A Judge's Life

Male, female, single, and married judges discuss how to balance personal and professional lives, network, learn from each other, etc., to do their jobs as effectively as possible.

Closing: Wrap-Up with Questions & Answers

The moderator summarizes the lessons learned, conducts the final question and answer session and handles the post program evaluation forms.

Recommended Program Structure

PROGRAM LENGTH

A one-day program that includes a lunch and stretch breaks.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

Lawyers who are interested in becoming judges and networking.

PROGRAM DATES

- ❖ Locally suitable date
- ❖ Avoid holidays
- ❖ Avoid days that already have a planned bar or bench event

THE SETTING

- ❖ Hotel
- ❖ Educational institute
- ❖ Bar association facility
- ❖ Community facility

FACULTY

A diverse group of women and men consisting of:

- ❖ judges of varying jurisdictions and expertise
- ❖ members of the local bar
- ❖ members of the Judicial Selection Committee
- ❖ if the program is held in a state where judges are appointed, it is helpful to include the governor's appointment secretary

FORMAT

- ❖ Panel discussions
- ❖ Keynote speaker
- ❖ Questions and answers

PROGRAM MATERIALS

- ❖ Slides and/or handouts, at the planner's discretion.
- ❖ Other materials from your jurisdiction
- ❖ Biographies of speakers, panelists, and moderators

COST OF PROGRAM

- ❖ Average cost is \$20- \$40 per person, checks payable to NAWJ
- ❖ Costs may include venue, coffee or continental breakfast, lunch, dinner materials, advertising and/or travel reimbursement
- ❖ Co-sponsors may donate space and/or funds

PUBLICITY

- ❖ See Appendix for sample press release.
- ❖ Enlist assistance of bar association.

SUGGESTED FUNDING

- ❖ Co-sponsors
- ❖ NAWJ district funds
- ❖ NAWJ local/chapter funds
- ❖ Bar association donations
- ❖ Individual donations

EVALUATION

- ❖ Distribute and collect written evaluations at the completion of the program.
- ❖ See appendix for participant and faculty evaluation forms.
- ❖ Send evaluations to the National Office for historical purposes.

A.V. EQUIPMENT

- ❖ A.V. equipment as needed

Suggested Program Agenda

8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	Program Registration
9:00 – 9:15 a.m.	Opening: <i>Welcome & Overview</i> Presenter: Moderator
9:15 – 10:00 a.m.	Part One: <i>Ethical Issues & Rules for Judicial Candidates</i> Presenters: judge, local bar member(s), member(s) of the Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics
10:00 – 10:45 a.m.	Part Two: <i>Practical Tips on Navigating Judicial Screening Committees</i> Presenters: judge with recent experience, member of Judicial Screening Committee, local bar member
10:45 – 11:00 a.m.	Break
11:00-11:45 a.m.	Part Three: <i>Keynote Speaker</i> Presenter: prominent judge
11:45 – 12:45 p.m.	Lunch Break
12:45 – 1:45 p.m.*	Part Four: <i>Nuts & Bolts of Judicial Selection: A View from the Bench</i> Presenters: distinguished judges from all levels of the court
1:45- 2:00 p.m.	Break
2:00 – 3:00 p.m.	Part Five: <i>A Judge’s Life</i> Presenters: panel of various judges
3:00 – 3:30 p.m.	Conclusion: <i>Wrap-Up with Questions & Answers</i> Presenters: all presenters

**Alternative Schedule:* Concurrent afternoon panels, one for each level of the court.

****** In jurisdictions in which judges are elected, and where ethical rules do not prohibit it, a presentation should be made by political leaders regarding the nuts and bolts of the political process of being elected to the bench.

Opening



Welcome & Overview

Welcome & Overview

Time:	Fifteen (15) minutes
Location:	Chosen venue: <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Hotel■ Educational institute■ Bar association facility■ Community facility
Welcome: (5 minutes)	Moderator welcomes the participants to the program and gives a brief overview of NAWJ, including its mission and activities, as well as a personal testament to its appeal.
Overview (10 minutes)	Moderator introduces the panelists and briefly reviews program objectives and agenda.

Part One



Ethical Issues & Rules for Judicial Candidates

Ethical Issues & Rules for Judicial Candidates

Time:	Forty Five (45) minutes
Purpose:	To identify the ethical responsibilities of judicial candidates relating to campaigning and fundraising.
Program Structure:	A panel of two judges and one lawyer, including a member of the Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics, and a moderator
Suggested discussion Points:	Panelists discuss the rules and regulations for the relevant jurisdiction, referring to the relevant printed materials given to the participants.

Part TWO



Practical Tips on Navigating Judicial Screening Committees

Practical Tips on Navigating Judicial Screening Committees

Time:	Forty Five (45) minutes
Purpose:	To review the various obstacles presented by the judicial selection process
Program Structure:	A panel including a judge with recent experience, a bar member, and members or chairs of various judicial screening committees, with a moderator.
Suggested discussion points:	<p>Moderator begins by asking each panel member to share his/her thoughts about how to navigate the process. They address the following subjects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ what obstacles might be encountered;❖ what screening committees are looking for; and❖ how to make the right moves. <p>Printed materials outlining the selection committee process are given to the participants.</p>

Part Three



Keynote Speaker

Keynote Speaker

Time:	Forty-five (45) minutes
Purpose:	The participants learn how one respected judge attained her position and about her life as a judge.
Program Structure:	Moderator introduces keynote speaker. Selected judge speaks to audience about her relevant personal experiences, sharing humor and insights.
Suggested discussion points:	Speaker discusses her battles with ethical considerations, judicial screening, her road to judgeship, life as a judge and how she balances her professional and personal lives.

Part Four



Nuts & Bolts of Judicial Selection: A View from the Bench

Nuts & Bolts of Judicial Selection: A View from the Bench

Time:	One (1) hour
Purpose:	Distinguished judges from a variety of courts, give their observations about the judicial selection process on both the state and federal levels..
Program Structure:	A panel including a variety of judges from various levels of the court, with a moderator.
Suggested Discussion Points:	This is an opportunity for the judges to discuss their experiences regarding the: <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ appointment/ election process■ selection process■ ethical issues■ judgeships
Alternative Program Structure:	Hold break-out sessions, one for each level of the court. Participants select the session they are interested in attending. Panels of judges from each level discuss their experiences, as above.

Part Five



A Judge's Life

A Judge's Life

Time:	One (1) hour
Purpose:	To give helpful suggestions about how to balance the various aspects of life as a judge.
Program Structure:	A panel of judges, with moderator, addresses the several topics below.
Suggested Discussion Points:	Discuss the balance between and among: <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ personal life■ professional life■ networking■ campaigning

Closing



**Wrap-Up with
Questions & Answers**

Closing: Wrap-Up with Questions & Answers

Time:	Thirty (30) minutes
Wrap-up: (15 minutes)	<p>Moderator summarizes the day's discussions and events.</p> <p>Moderator reminds participants to fill out program evaluations, preferably before they leave.</p>
Question & Answer (30 minutes)	<p>Moderator gives participants time to ask questions and presenters time to answer.</p> <p>Moderator thanks everyone.</p>

Appendix

HOW TO PREPARE

Advertising

- Advertisement committee should design flyers to be distributed to local firms, bar associations, law schools listing all relevant information (date, place, time, location, keynote speaker, cost & contact information)
- Contact information should include a phone number, mail & email address in order to answer questions, receive registration information
- Run advertisements in bar association magazines, law school newspapers & other local legal publications (check costs!)
- Invite selected members of the press to cover the program

Registration & Staff

- Designate persons to accurately track registration information: names, payment, lunch selection
- Prior to the program, an alphabetical list of attendees should be compiled for the check-in process & nametags should be printed (if so desired)
- An accurate count of luncheon orders should be compiled prior to the program
- Recruit/ designate volunteers to work at the registration desk during the program to perform various duties: check in, on site registration, merchandising sales, materials distribution & general assistance

Registration Desk

- Check in attendees
- Distribute nametags (if pre-printed), otherwise have blank nametags and sharpie pens available for attendees
- Process on-site registrations
- Distribute conference materials
- Sell merchandise (NAWJ items are available for sale, contact the National Office for further information)
- Compile final number and orders for luncheon service
- Display posters listing co-sponsors and affiliates
- Be available to answer questions
- Collect program evaluations

Materials

- Nametags (pre – printed or blank)
- Sharpie pens
- Regular pens & paper for note-taking
- Tent cards for the panelists & keynote speaker
- Program evaluation forms & collection box
- Agendas
- Quick reference Guides*
- Advertising posters for co-sponsors, NAWJ, affiliates, etc.
- Registration forms
- Program Evaluation forms
- Cash box

Follow-Up

- Finalize financial report
- Compile program evaluation information
- Send thank-you letters to co-sponsors, speakers, panelists, etc.

*In previous programs, a reference guide has been compiled by NAWJ members and co-sponsors detailing the process of becoming a judge in their respective states. This guide includes information on requirements, the application and interview process, levels of the judiciary (town, county, district, appeals, etc), salary and so on. This guide proves to be a valuable asset to conference attendees as they may keep a copy of the guide with them and reference the information in the future. A sample of a previous quick reference guide is included in the appendix, as well as an excerpted table from the American Judicature Society. Additionally, the AJS website provides a wealth of information on the process of becoming a judge on a state-by-state basis, and is an excellent resource for the quick reference guide. Costs for producing the guide should be figured into the budget and costs split between co-sponsors, who in turn, can place ads within the guide.

Sample Media Release Form

I, _____, give my permission to be photographed and filmed while participating in the National Association of Women Judges, From the Bar to the Bench program in (city and state) during (dates).

In addition, any interviews, photographs, and film relating to the From the Bar to the Bench program may be used in any National Association of Women Judges sponsored or co-sponsored publications.

PARTICIPANT

DATE

Sample Press Release

The National Association of Women Judges

PRESS RELEASE

Article 1. FOR RELEASE ON (DATE)

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN JUDGES TO INTRODUCE THE BAR TO THE BENCH PROGRAM

The National Association of Women Judges will present the *Bar to the Bench Program* on (Date), at (Specific Location). The purpose of this program is to inform practicing lawyers about the importance of judging, the skills and steps needed to become a judge, and life as a judge. Lawyers from the Washington area were chosen to participate in this program. The focus of the program will be on the understanding of the process involved in pursuing a judgeship. A panel discussion and luncheon with men and women judges, members of the local bar, members of the Judicial Selection Committee and in some states the governor's appointment secretary will be included in the workshop. Lawyers who are interested in becoming judges and networking will take part in the program. Judge Jane Doe, is the program coordinator.

For further information, contact:

The NAWJ National Office
1112 16th Street, NW, Suite 520
Washington, DC 20036

Tel: 202-393-0222

Fax: 202-393-0125

E-mail: nawj@nawj.org

Participant Evaluation

Please answer the following questions and rate your answers: 1 being the LOWEST and 5 being the HIGHEST.

I. MORNING PANEL DISCUSSION

Speakers:

- | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Clarity | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Knowledge of subject matter | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Effectiveness of format | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 4. Overall rating of panelists | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Suggestions: | | | | | | |

Materials:

- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Clarity of handouts | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Value of information | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Suggestions: | | | | | | |

II. AFTERNOON PANEL DISCUSSION

Panel Attended:

Speakers:

- | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Clarity | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Knowledge of subject matter | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Effectiveness of format | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 4. Overall rating of panelists | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Suggestions: | | | | | | |

III. GENERAL QUESTIONS

What did you find to be the most helpful?

What was the least helpful?

What are your suggestions for improvement?

Faculty Evaluation

Thank you for serving to facilitate this workshop. Please complete and return this form. It is only through your suggestions that we may meet your needs.

Please check one of the following:

_____ I am a Judge participating in this event.

_____ I am not a Judge but am a _____ participating in this event.

_____ I am an observer of this event (staff member, funder, etc.).

Note: On the scale provided below, 1 is low and 5 is high.

1. Overall, I would rate this program: 1 2 3 4 5
2. Please provide comments concerning the program content.
3. Were the program/learning objectives met?
4. What did you like most about this program?
5. What did you like least about the program?
6. What would you add, delete, or change from this program in the future?

NAWJ's Mission

Since its formation in 1979, NAWJ has inspired and lead the American judiciary in achieving fairness and equality for vulnerable populations. Led by two visionary women- Justice Joan Dempsey Klein and Justice Vaino Spencer- 100 brave and intrepid women judges met and formed an organization dedicated to the following ideals: ensuring equal justice and access to the courts for all including women, youth, the elderly, minorities, the underprivileged, and people with disabilities; providing judicial education on cutting-edge issues of importance; developing judicial leaders; increasing the number of women on the bench in order for the judiciary to more accurately reflect the role of women in a democratic society; and improving the administration of justice to provide gender-fair decisions for both male and female litigants.

From the day it was founded, NAWJ has been committed to diversity in our membership. Our organization welcomes both men and women. We include appellate, trial, tribal, administrative law judges, state and federal judges, and members from every state in the nation.

NAWJ takes pride in its accomplishments. We were at the forefront in the establishment and implementation of gender bias task forces in both federal and state courts. We have greatly advanced the administration of justice in areas of domestic violence, child support and child custody, and the treatment of women in the courts of America. We also are respected as a leader in educating judges on bioethics, elderly abuse, the sentencing of women offenders with substance abuse problems, improving conditions for women in prison; and the problems facing immigrants in our court system. Currently we are developing curricula on the effect of genetic advances on women and vulnerable populations, the impact of international law on U.S. courts, and cognitively disabled crime victims.

In addition to addressing these and other important issues, NAWJ provides an opportunity for judges to meet and discuss professional issues of mutual concern in a supportive atmosphere. Connecting with others with the same values, we laugh, enjoy life and mentor one another nationwide. We also connect with judges internationally through our membership in the International Association of Women Judges. Looking toward the next century, NAWJ judges are working together to ensure fairness, equality, and due process for everyone.

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