



October 23, 2025

Report of the Administrative Judiciary Committee  
Honorable Susan Formaker and Honorable Theresa Timlin

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The Administrative Judiciary Committee is made up of administrative law judges from federal, state and other agencies. We meet monthly for wide-ranging discussions of issues affecting administrative judiciary. This past year (October 2024 through September 2025) has been a time of extraordinary challenges in administrative law. One of our contributions to NAWJ was preparing an article that was published in Counterbalance explaining the effects of Supreme Court jurisprudence from 2024 on the administrative judiciary (specifically, the effects of the SEC v. Jarkesy and Loper Bright/Relentless cases).

We have also been working on a webinar for NAWJ (now slated for the coming year) to discuss the effect of the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision on the licensing of professionals, particularly in health care professions, as administrative law judges preside over licensing cases. Primarily, though, the work of the committee has focused on providing moral support and a safe space for ALJs, especially federal ALJs, to discuss the challenges they are facing in carrying out their commitment to public service in today's environment.



The National Association of Women Judges  
Diversity & Inclusion Standing Committee  
October 8, 2025

Co-Chair: Honorable Francine L. Applewhite

Co-Chair: Honorable Lisa M. Martin

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The Diversity & Inclusion Standing Committee remains focused on advancing the principles established in the NAWJ Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (“the Plan”). The Plan espouses NAWJ’s commitment to eliminate bias and enhance diversity through training, outreach, guidance and monitoring.

The Committee is responsible to monitor adherence to the Plan through the Certification Form that encourages NAWJ leadership, committee chairs/co-chairs and members to be mindful of the value of having diverse speakers, content, panelists and guests in all NAWJ programming. The Committee’s immediate goal is to have the Certification Form included in the on-boarding process for new members, committee chairs/co-chairs and leadership positions.

The Committee is available to partner with other NAWJ committees to review or measure progress and discuss Diversity & Inclusion topics for meetings and/or webinars.

The Committee meets virtually the first Monday of each month at 3:00pm ET.



Annual Report  
of the NAWJ IMMIGRATION COMMITTEE  
*Submitted by* Honorable JOAN CHURCHILL, CHAIR  
October 8, 2025

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## MEMBERSHIP

The Committee is Chaired by Hon. Joan Churchill. The Vice-Chair is Hon. Carol King. Both are retired Immigration Judges.

Membership on the NAWJ Immigration Committee includes active and retired Immigration Judges, State court judges who have handled immigration related cases as lawyers or judges, and a retired judge who handles immigration cases pro bono for members of the U.S. military.

## MEETINGS

The Committee has met twice so far since our 2024 Annual Report was submitted on October 17, 2024. We met in person on October 19, 2024 during the NAWJ Annual Conference in San Diego. The meeting was conducted jointly with several other committees, whose membership overlapped with each other. We focused primarily on preparing for our then upcoming webinar on January 16, 2025, on migrant child labor.

### **WEBINAR: *He was only 12 - Judges and Migrant Child Labor***

The webinar took place on **January 16, 2025**, noon, EST.

The webinar was scheduled for the month of January to coincide with Human Trafficking Awareness Month. It was well attended and very successful. Feedback was very positive.

The Webinar Title was: "He was only 12. Judges and Migrant Child Labor"  
NAWJ member Col. Linda Murnane, retired Justice of the Marshall Islands served as moderator.  
4 NAWJ committees jointly organized the webinar:  
the Immigration, Administrative Judges, Human Trafficking, and  
Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare committees.

The panelists included:

[Dr. Meredith Dank](#), Clinical Associate Professor and Director of the Human Exploitation and Resilience program, NYU Marron Institute of Urban Management

[Anna Lusero](#), Regional Coordinator - Workplace Crimes, Midwest Region, U.S.  
Department of Labor

[Astrid Munn](#), Lead U/T/VAWA Attorney, Immigrant Legal Center, an affiliate of the Justice For Our Neighbors Network

The webinar was enthusiastically co-sponsored by the ABA Judicial Division, which was very helpful in spreading the word about the webinar, which contributed to the turn out.

### **National Association of Immigration Judges [NAIJ]**

Our Committee member Holly D'Andrea of Texas has recently been elected President of NAIJ. Congratulations to Holly! NAIJ continues to function as a professional association and robust labor organization, albeit without the collective bargaining accreditation it had previously. The Association is affiliated with and represented by the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers [IFPTE].

### **ROUND TABLE OF FORMER IMMIGRATION JUDGES**

Committee Chair Churchill and Vice Chair King continue to participate with the Round Table, an informal group of former Immigration Judges which reviews and provides opportunities to sign on to amicus briefs involving immigration cases in which the experience and expertise of Immigration Judges is relevant. Their involvement with the Round Table assists them in keep abreast of legal developments in the field of immigration law.

### **AFGHAN WOMEN JUDGES**

Our Committee members continue to provide assistance to the Afghan Women judges located in the U.S. who fled the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. Hon. Beverly Cutler has been particularly active in leading a team of NAWJ volunteers in the DC/MD/VA area, where an increasing number of the Afghan women judges have located. Judge Cutler has been providing mentoring assistance to several of the families herself. Her heartwarming article chronicling her mentorship of 7 Afghan women judges and their families who relocated to Virginia was published in the 2024 Winter issue of *CounterBalance*. The article can be viewed on the NAWJ website at page 11: <https://www.nawj.org/static/275/counterbalance-winter-2024>



10/12/2025

Annual Report

Report of the International Outreach Committee

Task Force Report of Mentor Project for Endangered Resettling Judges from other Countries (Currently Assisting Afghan Women Judges) 2021-2025

Honorable Lisa Walsh and Honorable Caroline Temin

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### **A Project of the International Outreach Committee**

From 2021-2023, NAWJ has been providing mentorship support for Afghan women judges who were endangered in their countries and have resettled in the US. This Project will discuss its goals in terms of the Afghan mentees currently being assisted but is intended to cover future endangered women judges more broadly. The focus of this Project is narrowly defined and does not more broadly encompass all immigrant judges.

Providing mentorship support both for Afghan women judges who are resettling in the US and for those who seek to do so has been one of the International Outreach Committee's two principal projects.

Task Force Members: Bev Cutler, Lisa Walsh, Nadia Keilani, Doreen Boxer, Carmen Velasquez, Kathy King

### **Background**

August 2023 marked the two-year anniversary of the fall of Afghanistan to the Taliban following the withdrawal of US troops.

As of this report, 33 of 250+ Afghan women judges who have escaped the threats against them in Afghanistan are in the United States. They are resettled in multiple locations across the country. Starting in 2021, our Project has formed "mentor teams" in most locations where the judges are living. This network ensures that our Afghan judges have local friends, networking opportunities, advisors, and mentors. Our NAWJ mentors have done incredible things -- donated their time, furniture, taken our judges to lawyer events, given them speaking obligations and set up visitation schedules. Other NGOs, donors, and organizations have helped fill in needs -- like free online English classes, laptops, job retraining, resume building. JAMS, through the generous support and suggestion of Past-President Elizabeth White, granted each judge who had arrived in the U.S. by June 6, 2023, a stipend of \$5,000 for emergency use. The ABA formed a pilot project to help support those Afghan legal professionals who can qualify to obtain LLM degrees in the US and to sit for bar exams.

NAWJ members now lead mentor teams in 18 areas and states. These groups take different forms of organization and involvement, depending upon the population, geography and number of interested mentees and available mentors in each area. California, for example, has broken down its large mentor team into separate pods responsible for each Afghan judge living in that state. District 4 encompasses 3 different states but operates as a single team because these three are contiguous. Following are a list of teams and team leaders:

- Boise, Idaho: Robyn Fry
- California: Hon. Nadia Keilani, Hon. Doreen Boxer, organizer: Mytili Bala (who recently moved on)
- Chicago: Deborah Thorne
- Dallas, Texas: Hon. Deborah Hankinson
- Denver, Colorado: Hon. Colleen Clark
- District 4 (MD/VA/DC): Hon. Bev Cutler
- Houston, Texas: Hon. April Farris
- Maine: Hon. Rae Ann French (her mentee judge later moved to California)
- Miami: Hon. Lisa Walsh
- Michigan: Hon. Elizabeth Welch
- New Hampshire: Justice Anna Barbara Hantz Marconi
- New York: Hon. Kathy King
- North Carolina: Hon. Robyn Hudson
- Greensboro, North Carolina: Samaneh Hamadani
- Columbus, Ohio: Kevin Murnane and Mary Margaret Rowlands
- San Antonio, Texas: Hon. Rebeca Martinez
- South Bend, Indiana: Hon. Julie Verheye
- Washington State: Hon. Lisa Paglisotti
- Vermont: Hon. Patti Whalen

Other NAWJ members and affiliated organizations have provided services, items and emergency funding for the benefit of our mentees. For example, bridging her time in Northern California and Michigan, Hon. Carol King is trying to figure out how to create partnerships to assist with fundraising. Past-President Elizabeth White successfully obtained a grant for emergency funding for the benefit of the Afghan judges already in the US by June 2023 from JAMS, where each judge received \$5,000. Past-President of SABA in San Diego, Mytili Bala, developed relationships with many of the Afghan judges, triaged issues and problems and found solutions, from helping one judge overcome obstacles to entering an LLM program to dealing with health insurance to helping a disabled judge obtain access to emergency services. Our team leader in District 4, Bev Cutler, is devoted to the judges in her area and has helped with every bit of the multi-faceted process in putting together a life here including obtaining scholarships to the Paralegal Institute of Washington, and helping find housing, navigate school enrollments, and assisting with transportation when the social worker is no longer in place. Avenade provided a grant that donated 15 laptops to our then-present judges in early 2023. English Now! and WCIE, led by Paul Boesen provided free English online instruction for the last two years, for some even while the judges were in third countries waiting for their promised departure to US. The Public-Private Partnership for Justice Reform in Afghanistan has received a grant from DHS to provide our judges job retraining and education to assist them in becoming independent.

Assistance to our mentees has varied widely by geographic area, level of interest and number of available and willing mentors. Our team leaders have done an incredible and selfless job in trying to help acclimate our Afghan sisters to a new life in the US.

It is important to note that past grants, such as English Now!, Avenade, and JAMS, have expired.

### Present and Future Needs

Presently, 33 Afghan judges are in the US. Some are enrolled in short-term visiting fellow positions in universities. Three are enrolled in LLM programs. Some have obtained paralegal certificates. Two work for court systems in New York and Virginia. Some are working non-legal jobs. Most are unemployed. A few are potentially unemployable due to disability or age. Moreover, their family situations vary widely. Most have

minor children with them without the extended family childcare assistance they had in Afghanistan. Some have older children. Some are single. Some have elderly parents or other relatives with them.

Following our discussion, the task force concluded that the needs of our mentees change as time passes, from the acute to the long-term. Thus, we identify the needs for the mentor project as follows:

### Year One

Basic needs, rent, food, adjustment to US culture and norms, English training. Job searching if English is accomplished enough to make that goal realistic and immigration status permits. During this first year mentees should develop their long-term professional goals and mentors should help mentees understand the steps they must take to achieve those goals.

### Year 2-3

English training – More advanced and high-level written English, continued cultural assimilation, financial literacy, job searching, helpful job training. Mentors should assist mentees to stay on track with their plan to achieve their long-term professional goals.

### Year 4-5

Re-accrediting for those who are able, financial stability, finding long-term legal or quasi legal career for those who seek such.

### Goals

In recognition that needs change over time and that US NAWJ mentors cannot make an unlimited commitment of time and effort, we identify the following goals:

### National Leadership

Some benefits for our mentees come at the national level, for example, legal volunteers, language training, financial literacy classes, laptops, emergency funding. Being a conduit for these benefits is the job of the International Director, presently Lisa Walsh. It is her job to ensure that these are made available to all Afghan judges. In addition, she maintains contact with all the mentees as a group through Signal. Onboarding and Oversight should also liaise with Lisa or her successor to ensure that mentor and team or pod leaders' commitments in the program are abided.

### Team Leaders Goals for Teams/Pods

Different locations have different structures. Larger areas may sub-divide teams into individualized pods; smaller areas may only identify a single mentor or small team. The goals for the teams or pods are as follows:

### Onboarding

Each team must be onboarded into the project. **We need a leader at the national level to provide the function of onboarding. To date, Lisa Walsh has performed this function but without a structured program.** Mentor team leaders must be trained and in turn, the Afghan judges must themselves be trained to become mentors for later arrivals.

## **Oversight**

Currently, mentor teams are self-regulated and there is not much oversight at the national level. Bev Cutler has volunteered to fill the Team Leader support position to provide quarterly and as-needed interaction with team leaders to ensure that individual mentors are meeting with their mentees and the mentees' needs are being met. To this end, Nadia Keilani created a mentor questionnaire to be used to track the responsiveness of mentors to their mentees' needs. The questionnaire is attached to this document as Exhibit A.

## **Individual Mentors**

**Commitment:** One year, to assist mentees to locate and enroll in English language development programs, help mentees to understand the nuts and bolts of immediate adjustment to US life such as how typical apartment leases work, how school districts operate, assistance with job searching and learning how to obtain a job. It should be noted that mentors who are judges are usually not ethically permitted to fundraise, and the purpose of mentorship is not to financially support our mentees. If a mentor is joining in years 2-4 of the mentee's arrival, the goals are to assist in developing and achieving mid and long-term professional development goals.

In May, I took over leadership of the Committee from Lisa Walsh. I will endeavor to carry on the incredible work that she did in organizing and resourcing the work of the Committee. I cannot say enough in praise of the work done by Lisa, the Mentor Team Leaders and the Mentors participating in this program. They have all gone "above and beyond" in a myriad of ways and the need for their participation in this endeavor will continue for years to come. For this reason, I am hoping that we will be able to increase the participation of the membership in the activities of the committee. Initially I hope to work through the District Directors to enlarge our network of Mentors and Resources in the various communities where our Mentees reside.

There are presently 78 former Afghan Women Judges and their families in the United States. Most of them have been connected to Mentors or Mentor Pods. Some, unfortunately, were relocated to areas where we have no resident members. It is my hope, that by enlarging our network of possible Mentors, we will be able to locate members who live nearby even if that means in a different State.

The Mentees are all progressing with reintegration in accordance with their needs. Some have been incredibly successful, getting an LLM and even studying for the State Bar where they reside. Others are struggling with learning English or coping with family responsibilities. The Judges who arrived after March 2023, and, therefore, did not receive the generous \$5000 grant provided by JAMS - could all use an infusion of funds. This is one of the needs that I will be addressing in the near future.

I look forward to involving more of our members in this important project which will continue to be a major endeavor for the foreseeable future.

Respectfully submitted,  
Hon. Carolyn Engel Temin (Ret.)



September 2025

**Report of Judicial Independence Committee/  
Informed Voter Project**

Honorable Robin Hudson (NC, Ret.) and Honorable Debra Stephens (Chief Justice, WA), Co-Chairs, Annette Boyd Pitts, Education Director

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This year has been largely focused internally, on updating our program materials, and overhauling our website ([www.ivp.nawj.org](http://www.ivp.nawj.org)) to coincide with the NAWJ's website renovation. Beginning just after Labor Day 2024, the JI Committee and its Informed Voters/Fair Judges Project (IVP) "Working Group" met weekly on Zoom until the end of May to update our materials and complete the redesign of our website. Although the project has been quite time-consuming, it is nearing completion; throughout the process, our materials including all of our videos, animation, short video clips for social media, have remained available through the main NAWJ website. We are updating our PowerPoint slide decks for the upcoming NAWJ annual meeting, along with printable one-page handouts, which will be attached to this report.

While we have continued working on updating our materials, our members have continued giving presentations at various gatherings around the country. We are looking forward to having two panel presentations at the NAWJ Annual Meeting in Boston, October 24 and 25.

ABA Rule of Law Award, presented in Toronto August 2025

We were very pleased this summer to learn that the ABA was honoring NAWJ with its Rule of Law Award, in large part due to the work of IVP. Below is the announcement we received in July:



The National Association of Women Judges will receive the Justice and Rule of Law Award at the American Bar Association Annual Meeting in Toronto next month.

The Justice and Rule of Law Award was established to recognize an individual or organization who has made a positive national impact on the justice system and preserving the rule of law. NAWJ will receive the award on behalf of our work with the Afghan judges and the Judicial Independence Committee IVP program. The full press release can be found at this [link](#).

The current NAWJ president, the Hon. Michelle Rick from Michigan was present to accept the Award at the ABA meeting in Toronto.

## Social Media Collaboration

Earlier this spring, we agreed to participate in a social media project begun by the Bolch Judicial Institute, which is housed at the Duke Law School in Durham, NC. In collaboration with our friends at ABOTA, we assisted in approving short video clips (excerpts from our newly released video), which Bolch and other organizations are planning to distribute to their social media contacts. NAWJ recently sent an email to all of its members with a description of this project, and including links to the clips. Below is an excerpt from NAWJ's message, including the video clips:

Please use the links below to review the short video clips. These have already been posted on NAWJ social media platforms as well as others. Feel free to use these within your local communities and on appropriate social media sites.

### [The Judicial Branch](#)

### [Free from Special Interests Video Clip](#)

### [Fair and Impartial Judges](#)

We are very interested in hearing feedback from anyone who has begun circulating the clips, so if you have received any, please let us hear from you.

## Website Update

Our highest priority this year is to complete a total redesign and content update for the IVP website, which is independently managed by our committee, but is hosted on the NAWJ main website, at [ivp.nawj.org](http://ivp.nawj.org). Although we continued our work through the pandemic, and completed the video production in recent years, the content on the IVP website has been seriously in need of refreshing. Accordingly, our working group has been meeting regularly to edit all of the pages, as well as content within the pages (photos, slides decks, etc). We have now hired a web designer to assist us, and she is currently working on our site.

However, many IVP materials can still be reached through the NAWJ main website by finding "Informed Voter Project" on the menu of programs, and clicking to go to that page. We have changed the introductory paragraph on the NAWJ link to IVP, and made corrections on the existing NAWJ website, and the links to the IVP-produced videos and animations remain live. The tab that links to "Resources" now will take members to the short video clips that are designed to be widely circulated on social media.

## Program Planning for NAWJ Annual Conference, Boston, MA, October 2025

IVP is planning a panel presentation for the meeting in Boston; currently, the panel includes Co-Chair Robin Hudson, IVP Education Director Annette Boyd Pitts (FL), and Judge Christine Walczyk (District Court NC). The summary we sent to the program planners is here:

### Summary:

*Over the past couple of years, NAWJ's Judicial Independence Committee/Informed Voter Project has been updating our website and all of the materials posted there for members to use in educational programs around the country. These have been overhauled to reflect the changing nature of attacks on judicial independence globally as well as in the United States, so they can be used more effectively to address issues arising in the current environment. In the program we will explain and demonstrate the new materials, which include videos, animation, social media messages, PowerPoint slide decks, printable handouts, and more, so that NAWJ members and collaborators can message effectively about the importance of preserving an independent judiciary.*

### Learning Objectives:

- 1 – Analyze how the changing geopolitical landscape affects judicial independence and the role of judges;*
- 2 – Explore the relationship between judge's free speech and judicial independence;*
- 3 – Identify concrete communication strategies for safeguarding judicial independence – every judge makes a difference!*

### IVP Videos are still available on NAWJ website

Jl/IVP committee members, with generous funding and help from ABOTA leaders and the ABOTA Foundation, actively participated in creating new videos for use in educational programs. "Justice for All," with 5 and 3-minute versions, is about the importance of an impartial judiciary, and includes a new section, highlighting the importance of jury service. Jl/IVP Committee plans to include the videos in general educational programs for the public, and in jury orientation programs.

The production has been led by long-time lawyer and North Carolina public television producer Tom Earnhardt and his skilled professional crew, and the videos were released in 2022. In 2023, we completed and released Spanish language versions of the videos, and have continued distribution nationally.

Here are links to all four videos.

Jury Orientation and Public Education Video (Five-minute English version):

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1o6FVSB1Qb5h0Gu21RIZ4ZvJM3ZCMDP3y/view>

Jury Orientation and Public Education and Outreach Video (Spanish version)

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Cty6Eji1kL\\_D78GZVXDoytQ-T-MnJFPV/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Cty6Eji1kL_D78GZVXDoytQ-T-MnJFPV/view?usp=sharing)

Shortened Video (Three-minute English version):

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/12FPC0lhVr7GUaO5hb8xWEyEAooPA6kqz/view>

Shortened Video (Spanish version)

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AdEHq56eQSch6w63KSgiBBfbvgMvnPW-/view?usp=sharing>

We have also completed the update of our printable one-page handouts on five different topics relating to the importance of judicial independence. They are attached with this report, and are designed for distribution to the public at any of our educational programs.

### New Outreach Plans

The 2025 JI/IVP met on Zoom August 21, 2025, to discuss these updates as well as new strategies for distribution and continuing education efforts. We hope to coordinate with the NAWJ District Directors and present programs in each district in 2026 using our new materials, and emphasizing the continuing and even increasing need to educate the public about the critical need for our courts – state and federal - to maintain its independence and integrity, in the face of attacks, literal and figurative.

Anyone interested in our materials, or in collaborating with any of these efforts, program, can contact NAWJ Executive Director Laurie Denham, who will provide details.



## **REPORT OF THE JUDICIAL SECURITY COMMITTEE**

The increasing importance of judicial security reflects the growing need to protect the integrity of the legal system in an ever-evolving threat landscape. Judicial settings, including courthouses and offices, are not immune to security challenges that can arise from a variety of sources, such as disgruntled litigants, targeted attacks, or even broader societal unrest. As these threats become more sophisticated, the role of judicial security is crucial in safeguarding judges, court personnel, and the public. Ensuring that justice can be administered without fear or disruption is fundamental to maintaining the rule of law and public confidence in the judicial process.

In addition to physical safety, the rise of digital threats and cyber-attacks has expanded the scope of judicial security. The integration of advanced security technologies, such as surveillance systems and secure communication platforms, is essential in addressing these modern challenges. This dual focus on both physical and digital security highlights the necessity for comprehensive strategies that adapt to current and potential future threats. By fostering a secure environment, judicial security not only protects individuals but also reinforces the public's trust in an impartial and effective legal system.

To address these concerns, NAWJ established the Judicial Security Committee last year. Our mission is to ensure that NAWJ is well-informed on how to safeguard the independence of the judiciary by ensuring secure environments where justice can be administered fairly, free from outside threats or intimidation. The Committee works with outside organizations—such as the Bolch Judicial Institute, ABOTA Roundtable and others to share information and concerns and provide members training opportunities on how to keep our judges, their families and their court staff safe.

Respectfully,

Hon. Karen Sage  
Judicial Security Committee Chair

## MILITARY AND VETERANS COMMITTEE

October 7, 2025

The Military and Veterans Committee met during this past year, and discussed the reports in the press that sexual assault and rape complaints were reported to have dropped this year. There was discussion about the removal of reporting information from websites as a possible contributing factor to the reduction in the number of cases reported.

The Military and Veterans Committee discussed the limitations of members of the military, retirees, veterans, guard and reserve to speak out about concerns they have regarding the current developments impacting women, minorities, and LGBTQ servicemembers given the criminal sanctions they might face under the provisions of 10 U.S.C. 888 (the Uniform Code of Military Justice, Article 88) which makes it a criminal offense to use contemptuous words against or cause their use against certain U.S. officials. This is an issue when, for example, organizations to which those individuals belong discuss signing on to statements which could potentially subject those military members, members of the Guard, Reserve, and retirees to potential criminal charges.

Aware of those restrictions, the Military and Veterans Committee discussed possible programming that would provide factual information on the circumstances of these NAWJ members, which includes family members of military retirees, retirees, active duty, Guard and Reserve members of our organization.

We have inquired of the NAWJ if there might be a place on the NAWJ's website where we could store information on the historical contributions of women in the military and LGBTQ+ members which has been removed from Department of Defense Websites, as a temporary library until that information is restored to the history of the U.S. Armed Forces.

We look forward to possibly providing some articles for future publications of the NAWJ that aids in providing factual data regarding these issues.

Respectfully submitted.

Linda Strite Murnane

Chair, Military and Veterans Committee, NAWJ



The National Association of Women Judges Nominating Committee

October 2025

Chair: Honorable Karen Sage

The Nominating Committee met via Zoom on Wednesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>. I extend my thanks to the committee for thoroughly reviewing the voluminous materials and for giving so much thought to our discussion. Following our meeting, I called each of the nominees, who enthusiastically accepted their respective positions.

It is my pleasure to announce the following NAWJ Slate of Officers for 2025-2026:

|                                |                       |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| President                      | Hon. Pam Washington   |
| President-Elect                | Hon. Heather Welch    |
| Vice President of Districts    | Hon. Amy Blake        |
| Vice President of Publications | Hon. Victoria Willis  |
| Secretary                      | Hon Leslie Stroth     |
| Treasurer                      | Hon Karen Donohue     |
| ABA Delegate                   | Hon. Marcella Holland |

The 2025 Nominating Committee was comprised of the following members:

Hon. Anna Blackburne-Rigsby  
Hon Toni Clark  
Hon Dana Fabe  
Hon. Julie Frantz  
Hon. Tamila Ipema  
Hon. Vanessa Ruiz  
Hon. Bea Ann Smith  
Hon. Lisa Walsh  
Hon. Elizabeth White

I look forward to the leadership of the new board, and I believe NAWJ is in great hands.

Respectfully submitted,  
Hon. Karen Sage  
Committee Chair



## Annual Report of the NAWJ Retired/Senior Judges Committee

*Prepared by Honorable Joan Churchill, Chair*

REVISED October 11, 2025

### **Membership**

Our membership spans the USA, with members from Florida to Alaska, from the East Coast to West Coast, and from many states in the heartland. We are a large, but very active committee, with close to 40 members. Our membership includes state and federal judges, who have served on a variety of types and levels of courts: Federal and State, administrative, Military, trial and appellate, including a state Supreme Court. Several NAWJ Past Presidents are on the Committee.

### **Meetings**

We meet quarterly. Attendance at our meetings is robust. Over the past year we met 4 times. We met in person on October 19, 2024 at the Annual meeting in San Diego, jointly with the Immigration; Administrative Judiciary, Human Trafficking. And Juvenile Justice committees with whom we were jointly planning a webinar on child labor, and also with the Military/Veterans committee. We met by zoom conference call on January 30, May 8 and August 21, 2025.

### **CONFERENCES**

**NAWJ ANNUAL MEETING October 2024:** Our annual get together for all retired and senior judges at the Annual conference took place in the hospitality suite on the Thursday night of our 2024 Annual conference in San Diego.

**NAWJ MIDYEAR MEETING 2025: ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN – March 20-22, 2025**  
Several members of the committee attended the Midyear meeting scheduled at the Lawyers' Club at the University of Michigan Law School, the alma mater of committee chair, Hon. Joan Churchill.

**IAWJ BIENNIAL IN Cape Town, South Africa, April 9-12, 2025**  
Several members of the committee attended the IAWJ Biennial in South Africa. Our subcommittee, chaired by Hon. Kitty Schild, selected a 12 day preconference tour on which some of our members participated.

### **COUNTERBALANCE**

A regular activity of the Committee is submitting an article for each CounterBalance issue for its *Life After the Bench* Column.

- The Winter 2024 issue contained a heart warming article, by Hon. Beverly Cutler chronicling her mentorship of 7 Afghan judges who relocated to Virginia after they fled Afghanistan following the Taliban takeover of their country, following which all the women judges were fired overnight. The article can be viewed on the NAWJ website at page 11: <https://www.nawj.org/static/275/counterbalance-winter-2024>

- The 2025 summer issue contained an inspiring article about lobbying on behalf of the independence of the judiciary, by Judge Doris Pechkurow. Entitled *In Defense of our Profession*, the article can be viewed on the NAWJ website at page 23:  
<https://www.nawj.org/static/304/counterbalance-summer-2025>

#### **SUBCOMMITTEE RE AMICI BRIEFS & PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN DEFENSE OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUDICIARY**

At our August 21 meeting, several members expressed interest in developing a mechanism to learn about the opportunity to sign on to amici briefs being filed in defense of the independence of the judiciary. We formed a subcommittee charged with preparing a proposed framework for the benefit of NAWJ's retired judges who wish to learn of and possibly participate in these opportunities, for presentation to the new Board taking office at the Boston annual meeting. Karen Green offered to chair the subcommittee. Joan offered to request the incoming President to put the matter on the agenda of their first meeting. [Since then, members interested in serving on the subcommittee met on Oct. 10. See the Addendum for the Minutes of their meeting.]

#### **WEBINAR**

On January 16, 2025 our committee presented a well attended very successful webinar about child labor. Entitled *He was only 12 - Judges and Migrant Child Labor*, the webinar panel was moderated by Col. Linda Murnane. We presented the webinar jointly with 4 other NAWJ committees: Administrative Judiciary, Human Trafficking, Immigration, and, Juvenile Justice, each of which helped with the planning, for which we are most grateful. The webinar was co-sponsored by the ABA Judicial Division, and its National Conference of the Administrative Judiciary.

Proposed webinar ideas from the Lawyers for Civil Justice  
(We partnered with them on a webinar two years ago)

The following is a summary of the six rule amendment proposals, which are now open for public comment through mid-February. We thought you might be interested in these proposed amendments and the public comment process. Any of these topics could be presented as a webinar

- **Methods of service of subpoenas:** A proposed amendment to Rule 45(b)(1) would clarify what “delivering” a subpoena means by providing more methods of service, including by U.S. mail or commercial carrier and, when good cause is shown, additional methods “reasonably calculated to give notice.” The proposal would also establish 14-day notice and remove the requirement to tender witness fees at the time of service.
- **Remote testimony:** The proposal would clarify that a court’s subpoena power extends nationwide by amending Rule 45 to define the “place of attendance for remote testimony” as “the location where the person is commanded to appear in person” rather than the court where the trial or hearing is conducted. This amendment package would also amend Rule 26 to require notice of whether each witness is expected to testify in person or remotely.
- **Machine-Generated Evidence:** A proposed new rule of evidence, FRE 707, addresses the admissibility of evidence created or significantly modified by computer systems, particularly those involving artificial intelligence. The purpose is to address concerns about the reliability of such evidence when introduced without an expert witness, for example as a business record. The proposed rule is modeled on amended Rule 702 and would require that such evidence meets the reliability standards of Rule 702(a)–(d).
- **Corporate disclosures:** The proposal would amend FRCP 7.1 by substituting “business organizations” instead of “corporations” and requiring disclosure of business organizations that own 10 percent or more of a party directly or indirectly, whether or not that ownership interest is in the form of stock. The purpose is to help judges understand their recusal responsibilities by providing more information including about “grandparent or great-grandparent” businesses.
- **Voluntary dismissal:** This proposal would replace the word “actions” in Rule 41(a) with “one or more claims” to clarify that plaintiffs can dismiss individual claims, rather than only an entire action, without a court order. This amendment seeks to resolve a split among the courts on the handling of such dismissals. The amendments would also clarify that a stipulation of dismissal need be signed only by the parties remaining in the action rather than all parties who have appeared in the action.
- **Criminal case subpoenas:** A comprehensive proposal to revise Rule 17 of the Rules of Criminal Procedure would clarify that criminal defendants may issue subpoenas without court approval for both testimony and document production. Currently, criminal defendants in federal court seek leave of the trial court to permit discovery. This change could increase the burden on corporations and other third parties to produce documents, testimony, and other evidence for criminal proceedings.