

Hon. Marcella A. Holland

Marcella A. Holland was born and raised in Cooksville, a small town in Howard County, MD. She is a 1980 graduate of the University of Maryland - Baltimore County, majoring in Political Science; and a 1983 graduate of the University of Maryland School of Law, receiving the Alumni Association Prize.

Upon her admission to the Bar in December 1983, Marcella A. Holland was sworn in as an Assistant State's Attorney for Baltimore City and remained there for 13 years, the last 9 years assigned to the Economic Crimes Unit, before appointment on September 18, 1997 as Associate Judge on the Circuit Court for Baltimore City. In March, 2001 she became Judge in Charge of the Domestic Docket. On November 8, 2003, Judge Holland began her appointment as Administrative Judge of the Circuit Court for Baltimore City, the first African American woman to hold that position in the state of Maryland. As Administrative Judge, she handled operations in 3 judicial buildings, managed a budget of approximately \$15 million, staff of hundreds and 16 Masters, and 32 associate judges, in addition to media relations, governmental relations and planning for a new criminal courthouse. Judge Holland retired from this position as an active judge on November 30, 2013, but as a Senior Judge continues to sit occasionally in the Circuit Court for Baltimore City.

Throughout her legal and judicial career, Judge Holland has had very active community involvement. Among her many activities, past and present, are: Bridge Beyond Bars Advisory Committee, Girl Scouts, 2003-, (Chair, Advisory Committee, 2015-); Friends of Soulful Symphony, 2004-2009; Board of Visitors, University of Maryland Carey Law School, 2008-; Board of the Monumental City Bar Foundation (2010-2021). Mayor Kurt Schmoke appointed her to the Commission on Historical and Architectural Preservation in April, 1988, of which she later became Chair, the first African American woman to hold that position, serving two terms.

Judge Holland is an active Bar member, belonging to and serving in many capacities with various bar associations. She is a member of the American Bar Association; member, National Conference of State Trial Judges, holding various positions over the years culminating as Chair – 2023); Chair, various JD committees, including Courts & Community Relations, 2018-19; continuing member and participant in Judicial Clerkship Program; Co-Chair, Standing Committee on Diversity, 2018-19 and 2024-2025; Chair 2019-2021); National Bar Association (Board of Governors, 1989-90, 1992-93; 2010-11), NBA Judicial Council Executive Committee member, 2004-2012; serving in various capacities culminating in election as Chair in August 2010); Maryland State Bar Association (Editorial Advisory Board, 1994-2014, Board of Governors, 2001-2003; Co-Chair, Courthouse Construction Committee 2011-15, Co-Chair, Bench/Bar Conference, 2016); Bar Association of Baltimore City (Chair, Minority Clerkship Program Subcommittee, 1990-97, and Member-At-Large, 1996-98; Program Committee, 2002-2004); Monumental City Bar Association (President, 1991-92, 80th Anniversary Committee, 2015); Alliance of Black Women Attorneys. When she became a judge, Judge Holland joined the National Association of Women Judges and became President of the Maryland Chapter in June, 2000. She was elected Treasurer of NAWJ in 2013 and served consecutive two-year terms as Project Committee Chair, both positions placing her on the Executive Committee of that organization. She currently serves as Chair of two committees: Awards and Site Selection.

As a judge, Holland was involved continuously in judicial committees and projects. Among her judicial activities, past and present: Co-Chair, Family Law Committee, 2002-2003; Member, Legislative Committee, 1999-2002; Judicial Council, 2006-2009; Justice Matters Editorial Board, 2002 -13, and Chair of the Conference of Circuit Court Judges, 2010-12, giving her a seat on the Judicial Council and membership in the Judicial Cabinet. Judge Holland has lectured on various aspects of family law, case management, judicial reform and handling cases involving self-represented litigants in her home state, other states and the country of Morocco.

Judge Holland has authored two articles published in the Maryland State Bar Journal: *Judicial Administration –A New Judge's Perspective* (July/August 1999), and *The Emergence of Maryland's African-American Women Attorneys* (July/August 1995). She was the subject of the November/December 2016 MSBA Journal article *Integration in a Post-Brown World: A Conversation with Judge Marcella A Holland*. She also has a chapter in the publication, *Howard County's Black Pioneers and Firsts, Vol. 1*, 2023

Judge Holland has received numerous awards and honors. Among her most prized awards are: President's Award and Founder's Award, Lillie Carroll Jackson Museum, 1986; 1993 Distinguished Black Marylander Award; Druid Hill YMCA Volunteer of the Year Award, 1996; *The Daily Record's* Maryland's Top 100 Women Award, 1998, 2000, 2004, inducted into the Circle of Excellence; Ben Cardin Pro Bono Service Award, University of Maryland School of Law, 2003; the Rosalyn B. Bell Award, Women's Law Center, (2003); Alumna of the Year, University of Maryland B.L.S.A., 2004; the Margaret Brent-Juanita Jackson Mitchell Award, Bar Association of Baltimore City, 2004; Outstanding Alumni of the Year from UMBC, 2008; the Afro-American Newspaper Legends and Pioneers Award for Justice, 2010, National Academy Foundation's Law Professional of the Year Award, 2010, and Leadership in Law Award, the Daily Record, 2011; NBA Heman Sweatt Award, 2014; and the highest award given by the NBA Judicial Council, the William H Hastie Award in 2015; the Vaino Spencer Leadership Award, one of the two highest awards given by the National Association of Women Judges, 2018; Harriett Tubman/Martin Luther King Black Leadership Award, 2021; Monumental City Bar Hall of Fame, 2023; Monumental City Bar Association Legends Award, 2025; Induction in NBA Fred Gray Hall of Fame, 2025