

# COUNTERBALANCE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN JUDGES



## Serving the Global Community

The National  
Association of  
Women Judges  
Presents to  
the UN  
**page 9**

U.S. Chapter of  
Pan-American  
Commission of  
Judges on Social  
Justice Attend  
Vatican Summit  
**page 19**

# Inside

## MISSION

NAWJ's mission is to promote the judicial role of protecting the rights of individuals under the rule of law through strong, committed, diverse judicial leadership; fairness and equality in the courts; and equal access to justice.

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2 President's Message

3 VP of Publications' Message

4 Executive Director's Message

5 Judge Gladys Kessler  
Pioneer, Leader, Companion  
& Friend

7 An Angel from Jackson Heights

9 Women Judges Helping  
Women Judges Around the Globe  
The National Association of Women  
Judges Presents to the UN

12 Detroit Mercy School of Law  
Commencement

15 Navigating the Future:  
NAWJ 2023 Midyear Conference

17 Committee Spotlight:  
Retired/Senior Judges Committee

18 Republic of the Marshall Islands  
Celebrates Constitution Day

19 Members of the U.S. Chapter of  
Pan-American Commission of  
Judges on Social Justice Attend  
Vatican Summit on "Colonization,  
Decolonization and Neocolonialism"

21 Book Review:  
Code of Silence by Lise Olsen

23 Committee Spotlight:  
Immigration Committee

25 IAWJ Biennial Conference

40 District Directors

41 Landmark Partners &  
Contributors Bench

41 New Members

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
of  
WOMEN JUDGES

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# President's Message



“*The conference brought home for me that though we are worlds apart, there is more that unites us than separates us. Yet, after hearing from and talking with so many judges from around the world I can't help but think how fortunate we are as women judges in the United States.*”

**T**his Counterbalance arrives after the International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ) Biennial Conference in Marrakech, Morocco. I was honored to attend as President of NAWJ and be among 1200 women judges representing 72 countries. It was a pageantry of colors, smiling faces, and sounds from around the world. The experience made it clear to me that although we are worlds apart, there is more that unites us than separates us. And while women judges face tremendous challenges everywhere, and some more than other, I am reminded of how fortunate we are as women judges in the United States. The IAWJ Biennial Conference Committee and Staff did a phenomenal job organizing the Conference and coordinating all events. Thank you to all of them.

For those who are not familiar with IAWJ's history, it bears repeating. IAWJ is the vision of NAWJ Lifetime Member, Judge Arline Pact. The year was 1989 and the place was Washington DC. Judge Pact invited 50 judges from around the world to attend the United States Conference in Washington DC. It was there that the seed was planted and IAWJ was created. Judge Pact was IAWJ's first President. Some 34 years later IAWJ is a thriving and impactful organization as is evidenced by the attendance and programs at this year's Biennial Conference. We thank Judge Pact for her vision.

As we transition into the final stretch of my year as your President, I reflect on our progress as we continue to work on the goals and objectives for this year. We have collaborated on programs with the Judiciary Division of the Federal Bar; the

Public Engagement, Trust and Confidence Committee of the Conference of Chief Justices; The Academy of Court Appointed Neutrals; the Judicial Division and the Commission on Women in the Profession of the ABA; and the National Judicial College (NJC).

Most recently, NAWJ presented a course with the NJC, *Environmental Law Essentials for the Judiciary*, designed to teach state court judges what they need to know to handle environmental and land use cases, and to identify the science around water and air pollution, surface water use, groundwater toxins, hazardous waste, emerging chemical and land use litigation, and climate science. By all accounts, the course was an overwhelming success. We hope to continue to work with the NJC on such programming and courses in the future.

We continue to highlight, acknowledge and honor the many contributions of our country's diverse citizens through our Heritage Month series. Work has begun on updating our website. Our Districts and Committees have been hard at work, as is evidenced by their meeting schedules and the list of webinars which are posted each Month on NAWJ's website. Some of the Districts have hosted Coffee, Cocktails and Conversation and Bar to Bench events, which have yielded new members; and several Districts have hosted Color of Justice and Mentorjet Programs. We continue to work on starting a library of programs and projects for use and easy replication by members who are doing outreach programs.

We had a successful governance and



leadership Midyear meeting in Annapolis, Maryland. We were honored to have Maryland's Governor Wes Moore join us at our welcome reception Thursday evening. During the two days, those in attendance had a healthy exchange of ideas about navigating our future as an organization. The Report from the facilitator and a summary will be distributed and posted on NAWJ Website. The meeting concluded with a CLE on Problem Solving Courts; the Dos and Don'ts of Establishing and Maintaining Mental Health, Re-Entry, Drug and Veteran's Courts.

We will be moving forward on one recommendation that came out of the Board meeting at the midyear. We hosted our very first New Member ZOOM reception for all new NAWJ members from January 2023 to the present. It provided

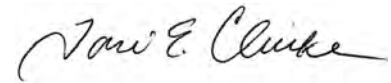
an opportunity for new members to meet the Board and committee Chairs and hear from leadership about NAWJ activities and initiatives.

We continue to support the Afghan Women Judges who, through the extensive coordinated efforts of NAWJ and IAWJ members, so bravely escaped their Country when the Taliban took over. We have partnered with JAMS, Inc through its Foundation, to provide financial assistance to the Afghan Women Judges who have relocated and are trying to assimilate in the United States.

After careful consideration, the schedule for the Annual Conference has been modified to begin on Thursday afternoon, rather than Wednesday. This one-day reduction has resulted in a reduction in the registration fee, the number of days

members will have to take off from work, be away from their families, and stay in the hotel. We hope this modification will promote greater attendance at the conference.

I look forward to seeing you in Indianapolis for the 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference. The Annual Conference Planning Committee has been hard at work creating amazing educational programs and opportunities to network. Again, I thank all of you for your support during my year as President. Your dedication and commitment to NAWJ is very much appreciated.



**Judge Toni E. Clarke (Ret)**  
President, NAWJ

## Vice President of Publications Message



“ You will have to buckle your seatbelt for this issue!! ”

**Y**ou will have to buckle your seatbelt for this issue!! The Summer Counterbalance issue celebrates international travel and adventure, courage and kindness, friendships, partnerships, and community, at home and abroad. It is an exciting time in NAWJ and you can read all about it here in this summer edition of Counterbalance.

The article *Navigating the Future: The NAWJ Midyear Conference* by Judge Karen Sage will take you to the beautiful coastal city of Annapolis, Maryland for President Judge Toni Clarke's Mid-Year Governance & Leadership Meeting. You will travel to Rome, Italy with NAWJ judges who are members of the U.S. Chapter of Pan-American Commission of Judges on Social Justice who attend Vatican Summit in the article *Colonization, Decolonization, and Neocolonialism* by Judge Nadia Keilani

and Judge Bernadette D'Souza. You will visit the beautiful Republic of the Marshall Island and enjoy the celebration of Constitution Day with the Marshallese in the article by Judge Linda Murnane, Associate Justice on the High Court of the Republic of the Marshall Island. You will attend the graduation celebration of Detroit Mercy Law School students with Judge Michelle Rick. Keep reading and you will find yourself on the other side of the world in Marrakech, Morocco, enjoying the exhilarating highlights of the International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ) Biennial Conference in the article by Senior Judge Marcella A. Holland.

Get an update on the state of Women Afghan judges in the United States in Judge Kathy King's address to the United Nations in *Women Judges Helping*

*Women Judges Around the Globe.* Get the inside scoop from Sally J. Kenney, Professor of Political Science at Tulane University, in the *Book Review: Code of Silence*, Lise Olsen's book about the grueling process of bringing a federal court judge to justice for sexual assaulting court staff in Galveston.

This issue celebrates the extraordinary community service of our very own Judge Carmen Velasquez in *An Angel from Jackson*

*Heights* by Judge Pennie McLaughlin and remembers the legacy of Judge Gladys Kessler, one of NAWJ's founding members in *Pioneer, Leader, Companion & Friend* by Hon. Justice Christine Durham (Ret). And, please do not miss the District Reports and the spotlight on *NAWJ's Immigration Committee* in the article by its Co-Chair, Judge Joan Churchill, Immigration Judge (Ret.).

I thank all of our new and returning

contributors to this Summer issue of the Counterbalance. I thank the tremendous support of our NAWJ President, Judge Toni Clarke. Finally, I give the biggest shoutout to NAWJ Executive Director Laurie Denham. Laurie, I am grateful to have you on my team. The Counterbalance would not make it to print without you.

**Hon. Pamela Washington**  
NAWJ Vice President of Publications

## Executive Director Message



“During the Midyear meeting, we discussed last year's membership survey, and being in community with other judges was ranked the highest benefit and top reason for joining.”

NAWJ is having a great year. You will read about a variety of activities and programs members have been hosting, and attending nationally and internationally. During the Midyear meeting, we discussed last year's membership survey, and being in community with other judges was ranked the highest benefit and top reason for joining. You have seen the graphic below, and Sisterhood remains the consistent word throughout the membership.

We have received three grants this year, two from the State Justice Institute (SJI) and one from the International Trial Lawyers Association (ITLA). SJI and ITLA are providing funding to update the NAWJ website which will begin next month. We also received a grant in partnership with the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NJCFJC) to produce five podcasts on Enhancing State Court Efforts to Address Child Abuse and Neglect. We will be presenting training curriculum being developed through our Rural Courts grant awarded last fall, during the NAWJ Annual Conference in Indianapolis.

NAWJ is increasing its visibility through several collaborative partnerships. NAWJ members received a discount when registering for the *NJCFCJ* and *National Association of Women Lawyers Annual Conferences* this month. We also have partnered with the American Bar Association, the National Judicial College and the Federal Bar Association on programming. Our Districts continue to partner with local bar and other legal associations.

See you in Indy!

**Laurie Hein Denham, CAE**  
Executive Director

# Judge Gladys Kessler

## *Pioneer, Leader, Companion & Friend*

*It is fitting in this forum to celebrate her work with and for women in the legal profession and the courts, but it should not be forgotten that she was known as a brilliant and accomplished judge...*

By Hon. Christine M. Durham

In 1984, wrote one of the first summaries of the founding and early activities of the National Association of Women Judges, just after her service as the third president of that organization. In her Foreword to a Symposium in 14 Golden Gate U.L. Rev. (1984), she said:

■ NAWJ, as an influential and respected institutional entity, commands an appropriate and suitable voice to speak on behalf of women judges and women functioning in the legal profession.

■ Apart from achieving its concrete goals, such as elimination of gender bias in the courtroom and appointment of more women to the bench, NAWJ exists because it fills a great emotional need for its members: the need for conviviality, for frank talk, for intimacy with colleagues who suffer the same stress, isolation, and loneliness – and for a hearty laugh at the absurdity of it all. As

sisters on the bench, we give each other strength, courage, and reassurance, as well as renewed energy and dedication to serve the public to the very best of our ability.

We lost Gladys last March, at age 85, after a remarkable life and career in public service and on the bench. It is fitting in this forum to celebrate her work with and for women in the legal profession and the courts, but it should not be forgotten that she was known as a brilliant and accomplished judge, first on the D.C. Superior Court (1977-1994) and then on the District Court for the District of Columbia. In that position she spent more than a decade (including a nine-month trial) in the case of U.S. v. Philip Morris. She issued a 1653-page opinion that was “significant for its stern judgments and its detailed history of [tobacco] industry efforts to mislead the public.” See The New York Times Obituaries, March

*“NAWJ, as an influential and respected institutional entity, commands an appropriate and suitable voice to speak on behalf of women judges and women functioning in the legal profession.”*



28, 2023. She also ruled on significant cases involving the force-feeding of a prisoner held in the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act.

Gladys received a B.A. from Cornell and an LLB. from Harvard Law school at a time when jobs for women lawyers were scarce. She worked for the National Labor Relations Board and later founded a public interest law firm in D.C. before her appointment to the bench. As a founding member of NAWJ she championed programs to fight gender bias in the courts, increase appointments of women to the state and federal courts, the inclusion of an Equal Rights Amendment to the federal constitution, education on gender bias in the academy and the profession, and the well-being and efficacy of NAWJ as an institution. In her later years, she remained a loyal and dedicated member of NAWJ, working on committees and projects to do with women in prisons, recruiting women for the bench, and mentoring judges all over the country.

Two of us who met Gladys at NAWJ's founding meeting have had the joy of counting her as a friend in the forty plus years since then, and we would like to share briefly some personal memories of those years. Judith McConnell, now a presiding justice on the California Court of Appeals, and in 1979 a relatively new judge on first the Municipal and then the Superior Court of California, and I, then the first (and only) woman on Utah's general jurisdiction trial court and later the first woman on the Utah Supreme Court and its Chief Justice, were part of the approximately 100 women judges who gathered in California in 1979. A fourth colleague, Judge Cissy Daughtrey (then on the Tennessee Court of

Appeals, later on the Tennessee Supreme Court and for many years a judge of the federal 6<sup>th</sup> Circuit court of Appeals), soon joined us in decades of work and play. Judith and I had the honor of making some personal remarks about Gladys at a memorial ceremony in her honor on May 19<sup>th</sup> in Washington D.C., a few of which I would like to share here.

Judith recounted that she and Gladys were assigned to the first NAWJ nominating committee and tasked with selection of the first president and president elect. The obvious choices were the two women who had convened our meeting: Joan Dempsey Klein and Vaino Spencer, then judges on the California Superior Court. She went on to say that "after further discussion, it became obvious to the committee that Gladys should be the first vice-president. We made her leave the room while we nominated her. We all recognized

her as a born leaders. At that meeting we adopted resolutions supporting ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, opposing membership of judges in private organizations that insidiously discriminate, and pressing for the appointments of a woman to fill the new vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court – all matters of importance to Gladys. From that time, we became fast friends, sharing a room at the annual meetings, traveling every year to a health spa (with Christine Durham and Martha Craig "Cissy" Daughtrey), and taking trips to Africa and India. If you ever took a walk with Gladys, you knew she had to stop, talk, and pet every animal she encountered, but at least that didn't happen in Africa!"

**Christine Durham** is a lifetime member and past President of NAWJ, former Chief Justice of the Utah Supreme Court, and Senior of Counsel with Wilson, Sonsini, Goodrich & Rosati.

### ***My own memories depended on the adjectives that described Gladys in my long experiences with her:***

- *She was vivid and vibrant in her appearance and personality, always colorful and "present" in every interaction.*
- *She was generous and caring, so kind to friends, law clerks, colleagues, strangers.*
- *She was funny and loved to laugh.*
- *She was loyal.*
- *She was deeply devoted to Art (her much-loved husband), her cats, and her friends (pretty much in that order, I think).*
- *She was fierce in pursuing justice and a better world.*

*So many feel impoverished by her loss, but we treasure our time with her. Gladys was a pioneer, a brilliant judge, and a dear friend. Her legacy is large.*



*There are many vivid images from the opening months of the pandemic etched into our memories. Fear of the unknown spread from home to home to schools to businesses and layered communities with foreboding and dread as death tolls rose around us. Heroes were made in these months, as people safely ensconced behind locked doors peeked out of their windows watching the few who passed by in the uncommon stillness. Health care workers, from doctors to CNAs showed up to meet the wall of need that amassed in a matter of weeks. The time was March and April of 2020, and the world as we knew it shut down. Another hero arose in these months, Carmen R. Velasquez, New York Supreme Court Justice serving in Queens, New York.*



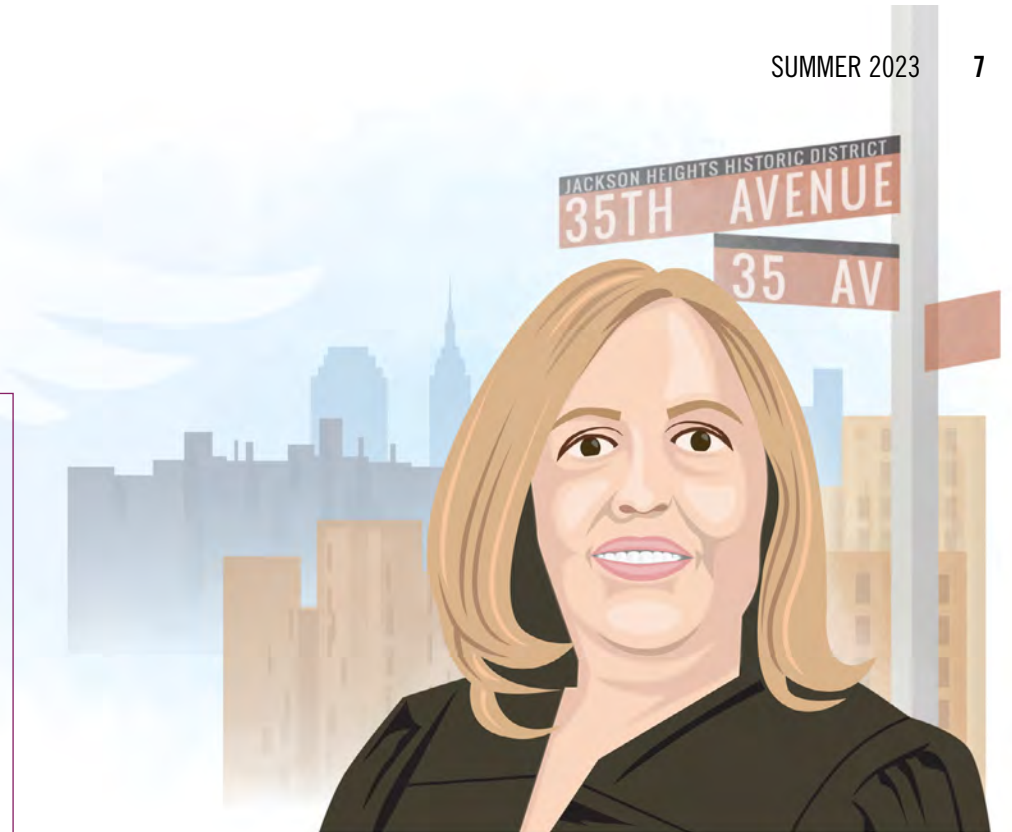
**By Hon. Pennie McLaughlin**  
Superior Court of California, San Diego County

# An Angel from Jackson Heights

**I**n Jackson Heights where I live, the pandemic was brutal. There is only one hospital to serve the local population,” Judge Velasquez explained. She spoke of the chaos and how families could not get minimal information on the state or whereabouts of ill loved ones who showed up at the hospital’s doors. “I had two choices, be afraid and do nothing, or stand up and help the community.” Anyone who knows this remarkable woman would simply smile and

know that she never had a choice. Born in Ecuador and relocated to the United States as a young girl, Judge Velasquez

*Judge Velasquez distributing food and other necessities to the local community*





knows what it is like to have language barriers in the way of getting answers. She also has acute memories of an empty stomach and the gnawing ache of hunger.

At first, she and other volunteers led an effort to act as a liaison between the local hospital and the families in need of information. It turned out the hospital too was in desperate need of help to identify nameless individuals who arrived too sick for forms to be completed. Judge Velasquez spoke quietly about the large trucks that showed up in a nearby parking lot to serve as a makeshift morgue. In the end, her efforts helped families find loved ones for further care or end of life services. But it did not stop there.

“We got a call one day from a man who explained how he was out of work and confined to his home because he was sick. He asked if someone could drop food outside of his door because he was hungry,” reported Judge Velasquez. Before long, this remarkable giving woman and her group of volunteers, all masked, gloved and unstoppable, were collecting food and distributing it far and wide in Jackson Heights. She and her crew received donated funds and often added all they could spare, to buy carts full of food. The supermarkets realized what they were doing and donated a sizable amount of their own. Then she found out about milk and vegetables being thrown out in upstate New York due to restaurant, school, and other business closures. That waste would not happen on her watch, and she immediately got the help of her State Assemblywomen to coordinate efforts to get the food to those in need.

The non-profit, *Brigada de Esperanza*, that sprouted out of the pandemic is running strong today. Kids have been matched with school backpacks, those in need of eyeglasses had the benefit of a mobile clinic conducting eye exams and glasses in their hands a few hours later. Early on in the effort, 400 boxes of food,

40 boxes of oranges and a truckload of food in New Jersey all made their way into this organization’s capable hands for redistribution. Nothing was turned down, and the collective donations have helped countless families. The catalogue of the many needs met is enormous, but the heart of the woman behind it all is even bigger.



# Women Judges Helping

## The National Association of Women Judges Presents to the UN

**T**he ramifications of the United States' withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021 were completely unfamiliar to me, until I received a call from Judge Lisa Walsh of the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit to chair the National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ) New York Mentor Team.

Walsh, NAWJ's International Director and representative on the board of the International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ), explained that the New York Mentor Team Chair would be responsible for coordinating re-settlement efforts for Judge Rona Sabawoon, an Afghan judge, and was an expansion of IAWJ's efforts to resettle more than half of Afghanistan's 250 judges and their families in countries throughout the world after the collapse of the government and takeover by the Taliban.

IAWJ, I learned, had been on the forefront of assisting Afghan women in developing leadership skills and deepening their legal and judicial training, since the early 2000s after the U.S. intervention in Afghanistan when women had an opportunity to pursue education and work outside the home, resulting in 250 women becoming judges at all levels of the judiciary.

"... We would not be true to our values and the values of the IAWJ, if we did not try to help these courageous women judges who had already sacrificed so much to uphold the rule of law and gender





# Women Judges Around the Globe

equality...,” said Justice Susan Glazebrook of New Zealand Supreme Court and president of IAWJ who Walsh cited as the impetus for creating nine mentor teams throughout the U.S. for Afghan judges arriving as refugees to Texas, California, Maine, Miami, Washington and Idaho. In creating the tenth Mentor Team in New York, Walsh indicated that she needed someone to bring NAWJ judges together to provide “friendship and mentorship” to Sabawoon, who lives in Queens with her husband, Ahmad, and a toddler.

“It is hoped that these women who lost everything may regain something of their professional lives,” Walsh said.

As a lifetime member of NAWJ, an organization committed to providing equal access to justice, I accepted the charge to help Sabawoon.

Her plight resonated with me as an African American in this country who, foreshadowed by segregation in schools and public facilities, was able to attend college and law school because of mentors and teachers who made sacrifices for me, despite my skin color, to have equal access to educational opportunities.

The Mentor Team, consisting of about ten judges and court personnel throughout New York City, have provided support and information on resources to Judge Sabawoon, like the Judges for Career Opportunities for Refugees Program or J-Cor Program.

Prompted by Court of Appeals Judge Madeline Singas, former Chief Judge

DiFiore announced the program last year in response to an October 2021 resolution of the National Conference of Chief Justices urging members to identify employment opportunities for Afghan refugees who worked in the country’s legal system.

The program is funded by the Office of Court Administration and offers full-time

paid “analyst” positions to eligible women and men Afghan refugees. Sabawoon began her position as an analyst in Queens Supreme Court in the Domestic Violence Unit in January.

The monthly Zoom meeting with Sabawoon has been instrumental in helping her adapt to the United States legal system. Mentor team judges have

*“They were grateful to have any employment, but these are remarkably educated, brilliant people who need dignity in work,” Singas said. “This program can really be life altering for them.”*



*Mentor Team members, Hon. Rona Sabawoon, Hon. Carmen Velasquez (NAWJ Secretary), Salwa Kader (President, IFPSD), Hon. Kathy King (NAWJ Projects Chair), Hon. Leslie A. Stroth (NAWJ District 2 Director and Finance Chair) attended the standing room only event.*



given her a primer on the criminal court and domestic violence unit and provided tours of their courts.

One mentor team judge who formerly trained lawyers and judges in Afghanistan also invited Sabawoon and her family to her home and others have provided her with information on English courses, housing and childcare services.

Of the Mentor Team's efforts, Sabawoon expressed her appreciation: "Thank you all for supporting me and helping me to get to this moment. It's my pleasure to have you all in my new life here in the United States."

As a result of my work on the Mentor Team, I was forced to come to the stark realization of present-day inequities where women faced persecution, violence and even assassination for pursuing education which limited the ability for them to

improve their lives.

Data from a 2021 UNICEF Report shows that each year of schooling increases future wages on average by 3.9%. According to UNICEF, a girl's education is not only a moral imperative but an economic necessity."

On March 6, 2023, NAWJ member, Salwar Kader and President of the International Federation for Peace and Sustainable Development (IFPSD), hosted a panel at the annual Commission on the Status of Women conference at the United Nations, on the topic "Let Girls & Women Have Access to Education."

As the principal global body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, the selected topic was sparked by the global reaction to the ban on the education of girls and women in Afghanistan,

following the government takeover.

As a speaker in the panel-which included Sabawoon; Asila Wardak, an Afghan Independent Human Rights Commissioner and activist; and Zarifa Adiba, a 24-year-old Afghan musician and author - the opportunity to address women from all over the world regarding NAWJ's work helping judges in need was life-changing. I quickly realized that President Kadar had given the NAWJ New York Mentor Team an international platform to share our efforts on empowering Afghan judges.

NAWJ has embodied the theme of the 2023 Commission on the Status of Women Conference ...." Innovation and Technological Change, and Education in the Digital Age for Achieving Gender Equality and the Empowerment of All Women and Girls."

The Mentor Team's work with Sabawoon, demonstrates how technological advances, like Zoom, can be used to collaborate and educate others in the ways of a new country, culture, language and legal system.

Participating in this global conference with women from all over the world was empowering and impactful and made me acutely aware that we are more alike than different and that our differences must be valued, celebrated and embraced.

*As a result of my work on the Mentor Team, I was forced to come to the stark realization of present-day inequities where women faced persecution, violence and even assassination for pursuing education which limited the ability for them to improve their lives.*



**Editor's note:** This article is adapted from Manhattan Supreme Court Justice Kathy King's prepared remarks delivered on March 6 before the Commission on the Status of Women, which the International Federation for Peace and Sustainable Development hosted at the United Nations.

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# Detroit Mercy School of Law Commencement

Hon. Michell Rick gave this Commencement speech, Friday, May 12 at Calihan Hall on the McNichols Campus of University of Detroit Mercy School of Law.

As I contemplated today's remarks, I recognized that we have much in common. Like approximately 80% of you, I was a first generation law student. I was likewise a non-traditional student. I worked during the day my first year of school and took classes at night. I intentionally sought out Detroit Mercy (then called U of D) because of the university's deep commitment to social justice issues. Inspired by the film "A Man for All Seasons," I joined and was later co-president of the St. Thomas More Society. I participated in the Urban Law Clinic. During my career at this beloved school, I traveled abroad through Detroit



**By Hon. Michelle Rick**  
Judge, Michigan Court of Appeals



iron curtain was crumbling in Eastern Europe and democracy and free market economies were replacing repression and ration cards. I actually chiseled Berlin's wall. My time here also cultivated my desire to be a public servant. Indeed, with the exception of my first year and a half out of school, the remainder of my professional time has been that of a public servant.

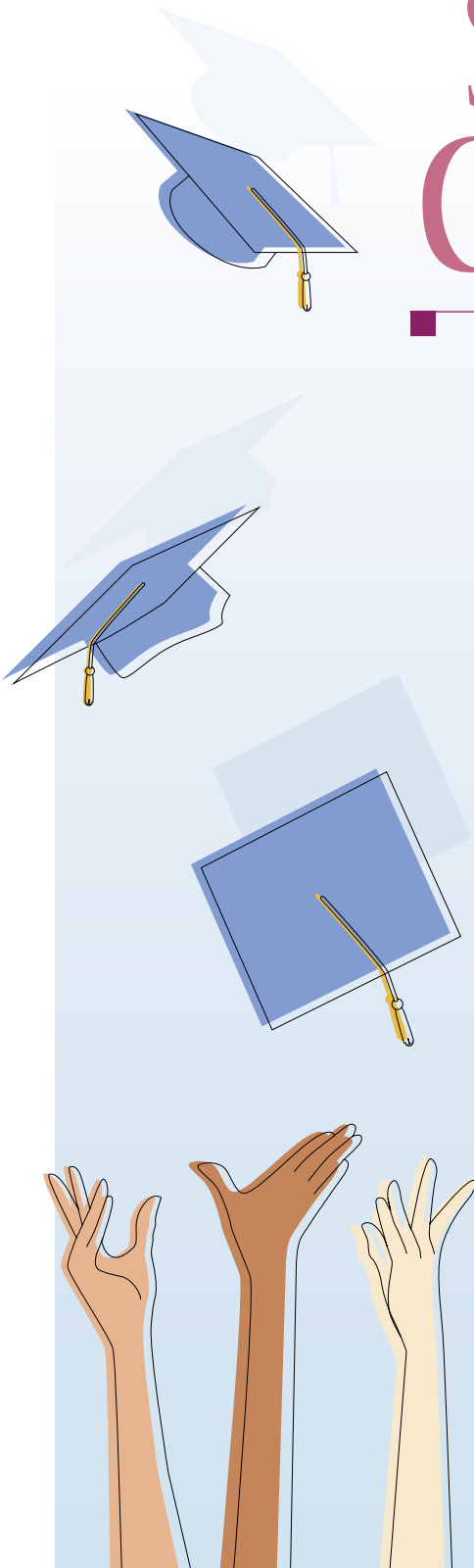
Because of our similarities, today I offer you these comments as I would offer them to my younger self.

I will focus my remarks on concepts that at times are overlooked in our profession, but which are vital to being an ethical, healthy and complete lawyer.

I offer 4 pieces of advice.

## 1. Live and practice law by the Golden Rule:

The Golden Rule is a creed shared by all world religions. It is the universal belief



that all humans are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect. According to Norman Rockwell's notes on the Golden Rule, this expression can be found in the following religious traditions: Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hebraism, Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism. Even the Freedom from Religion Foundation recognizes the value of this principle. They view it as a common sense.

Regardless of whether you identify with a faith community, I believe that living by the Golden Rule promotes a healthy law practice and a healthy lawyer. The profession you are entering is conflict resolution. It is easy in the heat of the moment to forget the Golden Rule.

As you begin your career, remember: All whom you encounter - your client, opponent, the opposing party, witnesses, co-workers, judges - may fail to exhibit their best self. Resist the urge to dish back what they may dish out. Yes, any of these people might just have a flagrant character flaw. But it is equally possible they have a burden inside them. Muster the courage to exemplify the Golden Rule.

## 2. Live and Work Joyfully

This advice comes from "The Book of Joy". The book is authored by Douglas Abrams, the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and The Dalai Lama. In this 2015 New York Times Bestseller, the Archbishop and Dalai Lama reflect on their lives as they answer the question "How do we find joy in the face of inevitable suffering?"

I impart to you two quotes. First, from the Dalai Lama: "I always consider myself personally one of 7 billion human beings. Nothing special." Archbishop Tutu

*I impart to you two quotes. First, from the Dalai Lama: "I always consider myself personally one of 7 billion human beings. Nothing special." Archbishop Tutu offered: "There are going to be frustrations in life. The question is not: How can I escape it. It is: How can I use this as something positive?"*

offered: "There are going to be frustrations in life. The question is not: How can I escape it. It is: How can I use this as something positive?"

These concepts resonate. They remind me of my time on the trial court bench. With a group of stakeholders, we created 2 specialty courts: a trauma informed drug treatment court for women and a high risk felony court. As I began working with these populations, I stopped viewing the litigants as "criminal" and instead recognized their humanity. I saw us each as 1 in 7 billion. Instead of assuming I knew best, I listened to them. Seeing the system through their eyes, I came to appreciate that criminal courts could be inconsistent, heavy handed, and insensitive to litigants. I learned to ask "how

can I help you", rather than assume I knew how to "fix" their problems.

Even if you do not venture into the realm of criminal law, the wisdom of the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Tutu are equally applicable to you. Today's legal arena is rapidly evolving. Automation, regulatory changes, collaboration, uses of artificial intelligence, including Chat GPT, and digital privacy rights influence the contemporary legal landscape in ways previously unimaginable. You may find yourself working with professionals outside the legal field, such as engineers and data specialists, as well as lawyers, paralegals, and administrative assistants. You are each one of 7 billion. Your work may involve failures. I encourage you - Embrace and learn from mistakes!



*President, Donald Taylor, Windsor Law Dean Reem Badhi, Judge Michelle Rick, Law Dean Jelani Jefferson Exum, and Detroit Mercy Law Provost Pamela Zarkowski. The photo is courtesy of Detroit Mercy Law*



### 3. Do not define a person by the worst mistake they make, and be your neighbor's keeper.

In his New York Times best seller book "Just Mercy", Brian Stevenson chronicles his career representing inmates on death row. Stevenson attended Harvard Law school where he accepted an internship working with death row inmates. During his first encounter with a person, he wasn't certain he was in the right profession. Over time, Stevenson came to realize that even those on death row who were guilty of heinous crimes, were far more than their convictions. They were human beings deserving of love and compassion. Many of his clients were victims themselves, experiencing horrors and traumas as children. Others, like death row inmate, Henry, were wrongfully and unjustly

brother's experience in Michigan's criminal justice system. One reviewer noted that what Professor Miller learned is an overlooked truth: life after incarceration is its own form of prison.

We not only have systemic issues in our criminal justice system, and our juvenile justice system, but society is experiencing an ever-widening civil justice gap. Seniors, those who are unable to work, the working poor, veterans, and crime victims are some of those wedged in that gap.

So, what can you do about it? Once you have passed the bar examination, I challenge each of you to fulfill your annual pro bono obligation, regardless of how you use your JD. Be agents of change. Support regulatory reforms so that trained

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*So, what can you do about it? Once you have passed the bar examination, I challenge each of you to fulfill your annual pro bono obligation, regardless of how you use your JD. Be agents of change. Support regulatory reforms so that trained paraprofessionals can help reduce the justice gap. Volunteer for an expungement clinic. The possibilities are endless!*

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convicted. Stevenson saw humanity in each one of his clients.

According to the Prison Policy Initiative, The U.S. incarcerates more than any other country. In fact, our rate of incarceration is more than five times higher than most of the countries in the world. Our system is overly punitive, and it is systemically flawed. We must engage in an honest dialogue of how to better use the criminal justice system as a tool for reformation and restoration, rather than simply being punitive.

Incarceration affects more than just the incarcerated. In his book, Halfway Home, Race, Punishment, and the Afterlife of Mass Incarceration, Professor Reuben Jonathan Miller chronicles the impact that the criminal justice system has on communities. He writes openly and honestly about his

paraprofessionals can help reduce the justice gap. Volunteer for an expungement clinic. The possibilities are endless! Recognize the humanity in the least among us, see yourself as 1 of 7 billion, and be your neighbor's keeper.

### 4. Take care of your physical and mental health.

This pandemic has accentuated the blurred lines between work and having a life outside of work. It is too easy to remain connected after hours. Failing to take time for yourself and your loved ones can have detrimental impacts. I am now more than ever fierce in guarding my off the clock time. I openly share my boundaries with others, and I respect other's boundaries and time away from work. That wasn't always the case. Indeed, when I began my career over 30

years ago, taking vacations, time off for sick children, or asking for accommodations was unheard of. There are several moments in my career that I desperately wish I would've used my voice. But from that failure, comes a new mantra that I live by. 'Family first,' however you define your family, is not code for keeping certain populations out of the work place. It is a practice.

In all candor I am able to take care of me because I am inspired by all of you - the new generation of lawyers. Thank you, Generation Z! You are hard-working, competitive and desirous of being judged by your merit. You value self-improvement and independence. You consider work-life balance to be important. According to an article entitled "Understanding Generation Z in the workplace" on Deloitte.com, Gen Z comprises more than a quarter of the population in the US. You have shifted the priorities of the work place in ways that many of us Boomers and Gen Xers wanted to move, but were too afraid.

While you are fearless, you are also a generation that has been impacted by great disfunction and disruption. The Annie E. Casey Foundation recently issued a report on Generation Z and Mental Health. According to that report, Gen Z's mental wellness has been compromised due to factors including the 2007-09 recession, seemingly endless wars, a global pandemic, and daily gun violence. It is a lot. Please, care for yourself. We love you and we need you.

I end these remarks with great hope. Your voices, priorities, and commitment to issues of fairness, diversity and equality and shaking up the status quo are needed now more than ever. As we look to the future, we must tackle many critical issues on behalf of our clients and communities. I am confident you will boldly address these challenges respectfully, joyfully, and mindfully.

*Thank you.*



Equal Justice Mural Project is part of KMH Mural Tour series. The project featured a team of 15- to 21-year-old local youth guided by FHN Teaching Artists. The mural was funded by the Art in Public Places Commission and Pepsi Beverages Company, with support from the City of Annapolis, Cohen & Greene, P.A., and Regal Paint Centers.

# Navigating the Future: NAWJ 2023 Midyear Conference

**M**embers and supporters of The National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ) gathered at The Graduate Hotel in Annapolis, Maryland in April for the Annual Midyear Meeting. It was an excellent occasion for members to see old friends and meet new ones, to dive deep into the organization's foundations and look forward to its future. Almost 40% of the attendees were attending an NAWJ national meeting for the first time. These incredible judges filled the conference with fresh outlooks and renewed enthusiasm. President Hon. Toni Clarke (ret.) welcomed us to her home state on a stunning April day. Her theme for the conference, "Navigating the Future," was as much a directive as a description because the conference featured several sessions that required active participation from all the attendees. The goal of the conference: to explore how to improve the effectiveness of NAWJ and learn to leverage the skills and tools of our sisterhood to impact each judge's local judicial community — was achieved.



By Hon. Karen Sage  
299th District Court of Texas

The venue was perfect: surrounded by delicious restaurants (including all-you-can-eat crab) and just a short, pleasant walk from the beautiful Annapolis harbor. Day One of the conference kicked off with a board meeting, followed by a session of the "Planting the Seed" mentoring program, a staple at NAWJ conferences. Mentoring judges met with over 15 students from area universities to answer questions and share their own journeys to the bench. They discussed their work in the private or public sector as well as their experiences managing the competing

interests of family and career.

Following the mentoring program, it was off to the United States Naval Academy for the opening reception. There, members met Maryland Governor Wes Moore, who holds at least two remarkable distinctions. First, he is the first Black governor of the State of Maryland in its 246-year history. Second, he is the nephew of our President, Judge Toni Clarke. Among other stories, Governor Moore told the group of his Inauguration Day celebration, when he



walked with his constituents from a dock that once received slave ships to his office in the Maryland State Capitol only a few hundred yards away. It was truly inspiring.

Friday morning started with breakfast and a welcome by NAWJ President Toni Clarke. After breakfast, members attended the first of two facilitator-led workshops, “Discovery Café Action Insights,” led by Dr. Cynthia Pace. The members broke into pairs to discuss our organization’s Diversity and Inclusion Policy, its impact, and how we might want to change it. After lively individual discussions, these pairs joined into groups of four, then groups of eight, each of which designated a representative to report to the whole workshop. Dr. Pace will present the board with a full report of the workshop, which will be made available to the membership this Fall.

Friday’s lunch and plenary panel highlighted the programs offered by NAWJ. The Hon. Gwenlynn D’Souza spoke about Bar to Bench. The Hon. Robin Hudson talked about the Informed Voters Project. The Hon. Kathy King discussed the Color of Justice. The Hon. Michelle Rick provided information about Mentor Jet. And judges Pennie McLaughlin, Pamela Washington and Julia Weatherly shared their experiences with women in prison.

After lunch, all the attendees re-convened for a second facilitator-led discussion, “What is Emerging at NAWJ.” This discussion focused on the five pillars of the NAWJ Strategic Plan: education, membership, organizational excellence, marketing and communication, and financial stability. Participants worked together in small groups to rank the priority of these five pillars, then presented their opinions to the group. To assist them in their task, members were provided with copies of the NAWJ Strategic Plan, NAWJ Bylaws and NAWJ Articles of Incorporation. Dr. Pace’s report will include a final analysis of this exercise. The report will help the Board determine areas that require Board attention in the next 12-18 months.

After a free Friday evening to dine around Annapolis, members reconvened Saturday morning for the final session, “Problem Solving Courts.” The speakers, including judges Lawrence Hill, Patricia E. Lewis, and Beverly J. Woodward, discussed their experiences successfully launching problem solving courts for veterans and those struggling with mental illness or substance abuse.

The Midyear Conference was made possible through the generous

support of our sponsors: Harry A. Cole Judicial Council, Minnesota Lawyers Mutual Insurance Company, Prince George’s County Bar Association, Women’s Bar Association of Maryland, Eckert, Seamans, Cherin & Mellott, LLC, and the McCammon Group Ltd.

All in all, the participatory aspects of the 2023 NAWJ Midyear Conference made it distinct from past conferences. Facilitator-led discussions encouraged members to interact with each other. Dr. Pace required guests to engage, to share their thoughts, and to ask questions. As a result, attendees got to learn more deeply about each other and about NAWJ in general. As one attendee said, “It was a great opportunity to see where we are and where we are going.”





## COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT



# Retired/Senior Judges Committee

The NAWJ Retired/Senior Judges Committee is a large, vibrant committee, with about 35 members. Our membership spans the USA, with members from Florida to Alaska, from East Coast to West Coast, and from many states in the heartland. 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. Our mission is to assure that retired/senior judges continue to feel involved and connected to NAWJ.

The success of our objective to assure that retired/senior judges continue to feel connected to NAWJ could not be more vividly demonstrated than by noticing that NAWJ's

current President, Toni Clarke, and her immediate predecessor, Immediate Past President, Elizabeth White, are both retired



**By Hon. Joan Churchill, (Ret.)**

Immigration Judge  
NAWJ Retired/Senior Judges Committee

**The success of our objective to assure that retired/senior judges continue to feel connected to NAWJ could not be more vividly demonstrated than by noticing that NAWJ's current President, Toni Clarke, and her immediate predecessor, Immediate Past President, Elizabeth White, are both retired judges.**

judges. Hon. Toni Clarke is currently a senior Judge on the Prince Georges County Circuit Court, of Maryland, from which she retired on August 31, 2018, after serving over 20 years. Hon. Elizabeth White, retired as a judge of the Los Angeles Superior Court in July 2020 after serving 23 years on the court. Upon retiring she joined JAMS as an arbitrator and mediator. Yours truly was the first NAWJ member to serve as an NAWJ President after retiring from the bench. I retired from the U.S. Immigration Court in 2005 after 24+ years on the bench. During my year as NAWJ President, 2012-2013, I marveled at how anyone could serve as an NAWJ President while still an active judge. I found the NAWJ

Presidency took up as much time as a full time job.

The Retired/Senior Judges Committee encompasses judges who take senior status as well as those who are fully retired. We contribute an article each issue of Counterbalance for the Life After the Bench column, to highlight the varied types of activities engaged in by our retired members. To cite a few examples, Hon. Barbara Levenson became a published author of mystery novels. Hon. Cara Lee Neville continues her passion for show horseback riding. Hon. Cynthia Baldwin serves on corporate boards. Hon. Sharon Mettler developed a passion for quilting. Hon. Beverly Cutler took up pro bono immigration assistance to members of the U.S. military applying for naturalization.

The Committee organizes a social get together at NAWJ's national meetings for all retired attendees at the conference, usually in the hospitality suite. We put on panels and webinars. We are currently working on one on the topic of What we wish we had known prior to retiring, for the benefit of our members who are not yet retired. The upcoming webinar and/or conference program is being organized by Vice Chair, Hon. Ramona See; it will be moderated by

Hon. Jamaa Moberly.

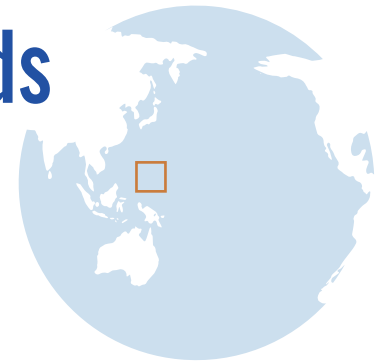
Additionally, we organize trips. Some of our members organized side trips for attendees at the IAWJ 2023 Biennial in Morocco. They organized both pre and post conference tours of Morocco. A few years ago we organized an NAWJ cruise from Boston to Montreal on the St. Lawrence Seaway. Before embarking in Boston, we organized an educational

program on sex abuse on campuses. When we disembarked in Montreal we had lunch with women judges in Canada, who organized an educational program for us. Our trips and cruises are open to all NAWJ members and their guests. Some of our members are participating in NAWJ's efforts to provide assistance and support to our sister judges from Afghanistan who located in the United States after the Taliban

takeover of their country ended their judicial careers there.

The activities of the Retired/Senior Judges committee are an important factor contributing to the retention efforts of the Membership Committee. In turn, our members, many of whom serve in various NAWJ leadership positions, contribute enormously to NAWJ as a whole.

## Republic of the Marshall Islands *Celebrates Constitution Day*



As U.S. lawyers and judges celebrated Law Day on May 1, 2023, NCSCJ's Delegate to the ABA House of Delegates, *Linda Strite Murnane*, enjoyed the first opportunity to share Constitution Day with the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI).



*The Republic of the Marshall Islands is part of the larger island group of Micronesia. The population of 42,050 people is spread out over five islands. The islands once held by the United States after WWII became independent in 1979.*

**C**ol. Linda Murnane recently completed the first six months of her two-year appointment to serve as an Associate Justice on the High Court of the Republic of the Marshall Islands. May 1st is celebrated in the RMI. It is a national holiday and is marked by RMI school students and official government agencies participating in a parade, formal program and other activities designed to appreciate the right to self-governance restored to them in 1979.

During the May 1st celebrations, Associate Justice Murnane accompanied the Chief Justice of the High Court, The Honorable Carl Ingram, and Associate Justice Witten Philippo and the High Court Staff to march in the Constitution Day parade. They then assembled on the reviewing platform to hear speeches and presentations from government officials.

Individuals assigned to the United States Embassy in the Republic of the Marshall

Islands as well as from the embassies of Australia, Korea and the Republic of China (Taiwan), also participated in the parade and celebrations.

For Associate Justice Murnane, one of the highlights was serving as a judge on the Republic of the Marshall Islands' High School Moot Court finals competition. The participating high schools held preliminary rounds on April 28th in the morning, and late in the afternoon the two finalist teams argued late that day. The winning team was recognized during Constitution Day celebrations.

"I was very impressed with the degree of preparation and the very skilled presentations of these high schoolers," Murnane said. "These students, their teachers and coaches had a very compressed time to research and prepare a very complex legal situation."

Associate Justice Murnane joined the Chief Justice, Carl B. Ingram, and Associate Justice Witten Philippo in judging the final

rounds competition.

The Constitution Day celebrations ended with a dinner and reception at the Marshall Islands resort, including speeches by dignitaries. The evening event was capped off by a fireworks display.

"The entire Majuro Community turned out for the day's events," Murnane said. "It was great to see the pride displayed by the citizens of the Marshall Islands in their independence."



**Linda Strite Murnane,**  
Colonel, USAF, Ret.



# Members of the U.S. Chapter of Pan-American Commission of Judges on Social Justice

## Attend Vatican Summit on “Colonization, Decolonization and Neocolonialism”

The U.S. Chapter of the Pan American Commission of Judges on Social Justice was established in November, 2020. Guided by their Senior Advisor, The Honorable Tamila E. Ipema, the U.S. Chapter developed a working mission statement and established a plan to pursue efforts to inform and educate judges, lawyers and others engaged in the U.S.

**O**n March 30-31, 2023, members of the U.S. Chapter of Pan-American Commission of Judges on Social Justice, along with their Senior Advisor, Hon. Tamila Ipema (Ret.), attended a two-day summit at the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences [PASS]. The summit implemented the vision of His Holiness, Pope Francis, for a series of workshops examining the present-day manifestations of colonialism and neocolonialism on Africa and the Americas. Speakers from across the globe, including NAWJ members Hon. Tamila Ipema (Ret.), Hon. Linda Murnane (Committee Chair), Hon. Nadia Keilani, (Committee Acting Co-Chair), Hon. Bernadette D’Souza, Hon. Carmen R. Velasquez, and Hon. Pamela Washington, spoke on issues ranging from the effects of global warming to those of

racial inequality and access to justice. Cardinal Peter K.A. Turkson, PASS Chancellor, welcomed the more than seventy speakers and shared Pope Francis’s hope for more just judicial systems across the globe and for recognition of the ongoing effects of historical and present-day colonialism on our systems of justice. Thereafter, renowned scholars, jurists, and academicians exchanged ideas and strategies for the implementation of the Pontiff’s vision.

The U.S. Chapter of Pan-American Commission of Judges on Social Justice was formed in 2019, following the Vatican’s invitation to the then-president of the NAWJ, Judge Tamila Ipema, as well as nine other NAWJ members, to attend a summit wherein Pope Francis selected individuals



By Hon. Bernadette D’Souza &  
Hon. Nadia Keilani



from six Pan-American countries to form a newly-constituted Pan-American Commission of Judges on Social Justice and Franciscan Doctrine. Judge Ipema, based on her lifetime of dedication to issues of social justice, was one of the six individuals chosen by Pope Francis to join the Commission. Indeed, each of the Commission’s six members was chosen based on their unique contributions to issues encompassed by Pope Francis’s vision; the Commission’s members were then tasked with forming a chapter of the Commission in their home countries. Immediately upon her arrival home, Judge Ipema recruited NAWJ colleagues to form the U.S. chapter of the Commission, tasking Hon. Linda Murnane with chairing the chapter. In the nearly four years since the formation of the U.S. chapter, its nine

members have issued a mission statement, created a website [found here: <https://passuschapter.com/>], and held monthly meetings, sharing ideas and strategies on best practices for the implementation of

Pope Francis’s vision. Their dedication to the task with which they were entrusted continues, as does their pride that NAWJ members are at the core of the US Pan-American Commission.



**legal system of challenges with respect to social justice and to engage in meaningful dialogue to address issues related to bias, racism, financial and food insecurity, access to affordable medical care and similar issues on which the legal community can have a positive impact.**



*Commission members, left to right, Judges Carmen Velasquez, Tamila Ipema (Ret.), Nadia Keilani, Pamela Washington, Bernadette D’Souza, and Linda Murnane.*



# bookreview

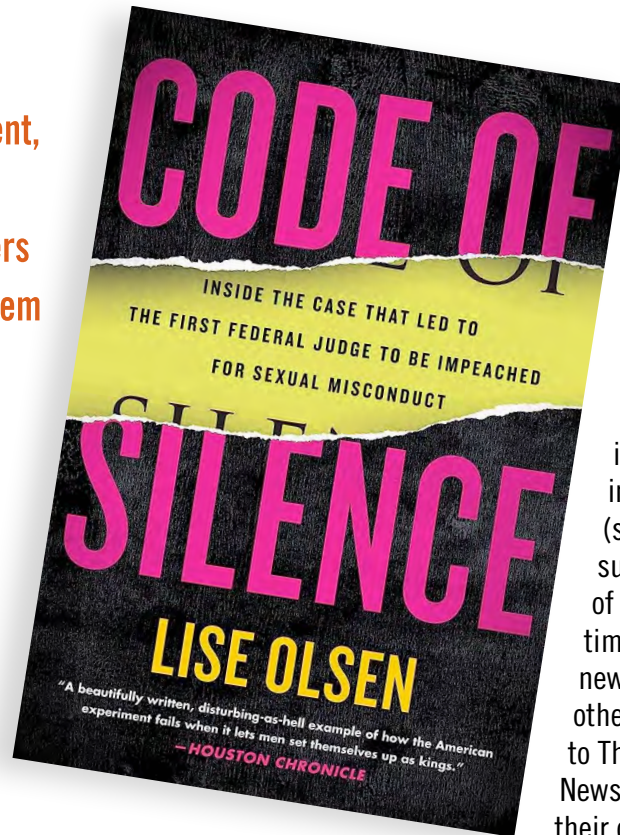
Winner  
2021 IRE  
Book Award

In this era of the #MeToo movement, learn about the brave whistleblowers that tested the federal court system by exposing those on the bench who seemingly disregarded the laws they swore to uphold.

Journalists alongside survivors deserve credit as the drivers of the #MeToo movement. Dr. Judith Herman identified, named, studied, and compared sexual trauma to combat trauma in her pathbreaking book *Trauma and Recovery* (New York: Basic Books, 1992). In her new book *Truth and Repair* she hypothesizes that as women move past token representation in professions ranging from psychiatry to journalism to law, the incipient form of justice she dubs housecleaning begins by naming the most notorious sexual predators in their midst and removing them from their positions of power.



By Sally J. Kenney  
Professor of political science,  
Tulane University



“Houston Chronicle investigative reporter Lise Olsen’s book, *Code of Silence: Inside the Case that Led to the First Federal Judge to Be Impeached for Sexual Misconduct* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2021) tells the harrowing story of case manager Cathy McBroom to hold US District Judge Samuel Bristow Kent accountable for sexually assaulting and sexually harassing her for years.”

It is finally starting in my own ugly profession, political science, and among the profession I study: the judiciary.

Olsen’s description of Fifth Circuit Judge Edith Jones’s actions (or rather, inactions) fill an entire chapter reminding that having individual women on the bench is no guarantee that male privilege ends.

As the film *She Said* illustrates, these crusading investigative journalists (some who are themselves survivors or family members of survivors) have, for the first time, had the support of their news organizations although other organizations from NBC to The Washington Post to Fox News continued to suppress their own reporters and savage whistleblowers. Houston Chronicle investigative reporter Lise Olsen’s book, *Code of Silence: Inside the Case that Led to the First Federal Judge to Be Impeached for Sexual Misconduct* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2021) tells the harrowing story of case manager Cathy McBroom to hold US District Judge Samuel Bristow Kent accountable for sexually assaulting and sexually harassing her for years. Like so many books published during COVID, it did not receive the attention it deserves. I only discovered it by reading Slate and Newsweek editor Dahlia Lithwick’s book *Lady Justice: Women, the Law, and the Battle to Save America* (New York: Penguin, 2022). Lithwick was one of many former clerks of the Ninth Circuit to blow the whistle on Reagan appointee



Judge Kozinski. Olsen also analyzes Kuzinski's reign of predation and impunity on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

If Channel Miller's case (*Know My Name* [New York: Viking, 2019]) is an example of bystanders and upstanders intervening to interrupt a Stanford star swimmer from sexually assaulting her while she lay unconscious on the ground, *Code of Silence* reveals their more numerous counterparts, the enablers. Olsen reveals how fellow court employees and other judges and lawyers colluded to allow this big fish in a small pond called Galveston to openly abuse employees. To call the behavior of Judges Kent and Kozinski an open secret gives too much weight to secrecy; many knew and did nothing. For example, former Kozinski law clerk Brett Kavanaugh, under oath, testified he saw nothing untoward—no unwanted touching and ogling, no hit list of dirty jokes, no favorite bits of pornography. Those bystanders then become the principal agents of isolation and shunning after victims complain.

Both Kent and Kuzinski exuded arrogance and the entitled conviction they could get away with anything within what philosopher Martha Nussbaum calls *Citadels of Pride* (New York: Norton, 2021). If you are a good enough athlete, a successful enough comedian or producer, a dazzling enough young legal mind, or a rich enough presidential candidate you can “grab them by the pussy” and openly brag about it. As Kozinski quipped, “being a federal judge means never having to say you're sorry” (Nussbaum 2021, 129).

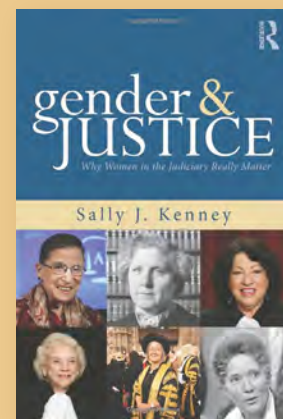
Olsen reconstructs how Kent carefully groomed McBroom and

while simultaneously abusing his legal secretary, Donna Wilkerson. He stoked animosity between the women and made each believe she were the primary victim, targeting, manipulating, and abusing both with sinister skill.

The hypocrisy of McBroom's case against Judge Kent rivals that of Anita Hill's complaints against Clarence Thomas. Hill stated that Clarence Thomas sexually harassing her while he was chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) the body Congress tasked with enforcing the laws against sexual harassment. Federal judges such as Kent hear the cases arising from laws prohibiting sexual harassment as well as the Violence Against Women Act and their doctrines interpret them and give them meaning. We hope they will hold corporations, universities, religious institutions, sports franchises, and public entities like the military accountable. Like Congress until recently, however, federal judges had no shame in holding others to standards of ethical conduct they choose not to apply to themselves. Numerous gender bias taskforces have documented through surveys and social scientific evidence how widespread sexual harassment is in the legal profession. Not until Judge Kozinski resigned, however, did Chief Justice Roberts convene a Workplace Conduct Working Group which, unsurprisingly, found sexual misconduct to be ubiquitous (<https://www.uscourts.gov/news/2022/03/16/judiciary-releases-workplace-conduct-working-group-report-recommends-9-changes-build>) and recommended new processes and procedures—the kind consent decrees or settlement agreements that federal judges might have imposed on cases before them.

Having read many memoirs about rape victims and Title VII plaintiffs, I should not be surprised when Olsen finds the price of holding one's harm doer accountable is devastating to one's career, health, and peace of mind. Legal institutions protect the powerful members of their community while crushing the other members of the community: faculty over students, priests over parishioners, generals over soldiers, moguls over actresses, lawyers over clients, judges over clerks and administrators.

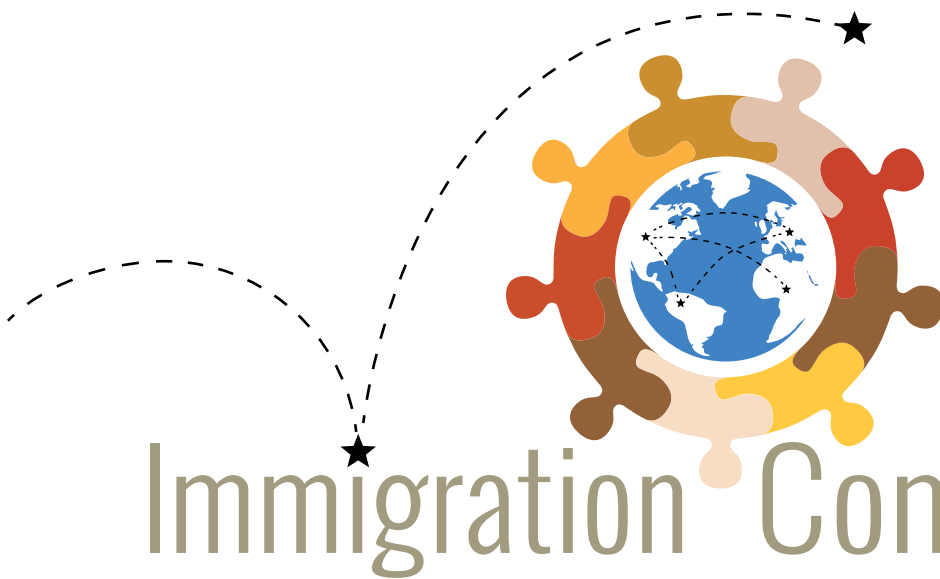
No one can read this book and think that sexual harassment law and policy protects workers or that judges are accountable for their unethical actions. When institutions such as tweets or exposés to courageously raise their voices together. One cannot help but wonder, how many victims does it take before we stop one harm doer? Why do victims have to pay such a high price for justice?



**Sally J. Kenney** is a professor of political science at Tulane University, the author of *Gender and Justice: Why Women in the Judiciary Really Matter* (New York: Routledge, 2013) and the recipient of the National Association of Women Judges' Florence Murray Award in 2013



## COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT



# Immigration Committee

*A brief review of the Immigration Committee's activities to fulfill the NAWJ mission to promote the judicial role of protecting the rule of law and fairness and equality for vulnerable populations.*

Membership on the NAWJ Immigration Committee includes active and retired Immigration Judges, the President of NAIJ [the National Association of Immigration Judges], two past presidents of NAIJ, state court judges who have handled immigration cases as lawyers or judges and a retired judge who handles immigration cases pro bono for members of the U.S. military.

The Immigration Court is an administrative court currently housed in the U.S. Department of Justice. The independence of its judges has repeatedly been called into question, given its placement in the U.S. Department of Justice, a prosecutorial agency headed by the U.S. Attorney General, the top prosecutor for the United States. NAWJ has been in the forefront for

many years in advocating for structural changes and sufficient resources to assure that Immigration Judges are able to function as impartial adjudicators, who accord due process to all parties before them. NAWJ was the first national professional organization to call for restructuring of the Immigration Court by separating the Immigration Court from the Department of Justice. On April 16, 2002, NAWJ adopted a resolution signed by Honorable Karla Moskowitz, President, NAWJ in support of:

*“an independent structure for the Immigration Court, (at both the trial and appellate levels) outside the Department of Justice, to assure fairness and equal access to justice, and to*

*assure both the appearance and reality of impartiality.”*

Since then our call for an independent structure for the Immigration Court outside the U.S. Department of Justice has been joined by many other national organizations including the American Bar Association, the Federal Bar Association, and the American Immigration Lawyers Association, to name a few judicial and legal organizations that have followed our lead.

NAWJ followed up with an additional resolution adopted October 18, 2008, signed by the Honorable Fernande Duffly, President, NAWJ, calling for enactment of federal immigration legislation to Ensure Fairness and Efficiency in Administrative Immigration Proceedings.

On February 28, 2020, NAWJ President Honorable Bernadette D'Souza wrote letters on behalf of

NAWJ to Congressional leaders urging Congress:

*“to establish an independent Immigration Court system, under Article I of the United States Constitution that would assure due process and judicial independence.”*

On February 8, 2022 NAWJ President Honorable Elizabeth White sent letters of endorsement on behalf of NAWJ to the members of Congress who sponsored HR 6577, a bill introduced in Congress to establish an Article I Court. [The bill was reported favorably out of the Judiciary Committee, but not scheduled for a floor vote.]

Through our work in promoting the independence of the Immigration Courts, the NAWJ Immigration Committee has been directly engaged in fulfilling the mission of NAWJ to:

*“promote the judicial role of protecting the rights of individuals under the rule of law through strong, diverse judicial leadership; fairness and equality in the courts; and equal access to justice.”*

In support of the NAWJ Immigration Committee’s focus to promote independence of the Immigration Courts, members of the NAWJ Immigration Committee have organized, presented and co-sponsored panels and webinars concerning issues relating to the work of the Immigration Courts. At this writing a webinar is being organized by the Immigration

Committee on the subject of the role of state and federal judges considering cases of migrant juveniles whose cases present potential claims for special immigrant juvenile status, an immigration status created by federal law that requires findings by state judges. The webinar is scheduled for September 6, 2023. It will be moderated by committee member Tiffany Palmer, a Judge on the Court of Common Pleas in Philadelphia, PA.



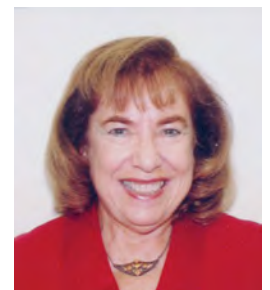
Earlier this year we co-sponsored a webinar presented by the American Bar Association’s Judicial Division on Adjudicatory Independence Issues facing Immigration Judges. The webinar touched on the question of whether the same independence issues affect, or could potentially affect, administrative adjudicators in general.

Additionally our committee members have authored articles on issues touching on immigration adjudication. Several have been published in NAWJ’s Counterbalance. Others have been published in other publications, Chair Joan Churchill’s article entitled *Compelling Reasons for an Article I Immigration Court*, was published in the winter edition of the ABA Judges Journal, issued March 11, 2022. NAWJ Past Vice

President Mimi Tsankov’s article entitled *Human Rights at Risk: The Immigration Courts Are in Need of an Overhaul*, previously published in the April 27, 2020 issue of the ABA Human Rights Magazine, was reprinted in the winter issue of the ABA Judges Journal. Chair Joan Churchill’s article entitled *An Article I Immigration Court - An Idea that is Growing - A History of Efforts to Make it a Reality* was published in the Summer 2021 edition of Counterbalance, [Volume 35, Issue 2], at page 15.

Our committee has also been involved in the past couple years with NAWJ’s efforts to provide support to our sister judges, a relatively small number, who have come to the United States after fleeing Afghanistan upon its takeover by the Taliban. The committee has served as a resource for IAWJ and NAWJ efforts to help those judges adjust to the U.S.

Our committee member Judge Beverly Cutler has been providing pro bono assistance to members of the U.S. military who have immigration & naturalization related issues. She keeps us apprised of the very special immigration issues involved with foreign members of the U.S. military.



**By Hon. Joan Churchill, (Ret.)**  
Immigration Judge  
Chair, NAWJ Immigration Committee

# IAWJ Biennial Conference

The 2023 IAWJ Biennial Conference was held in Marrakech, Morocco, and was hosted by the Union of Moroccan Women Judges with the support of the Moroccan Ministry of Justice and the Region of Marrakech. The theme of the conference was “Women judges: achievements and challenges.”



Arriving in Marrakech, Morocco a few days before the start of the IAWJ Biennial Conference gave me an opportunity to savor the culture, sights and sounds of one of the most exotic cities in the world. It also allowed me to observe the gathering of 1200 women judges from 72 countries as they came into the Kenzi Rose Garden hotel in various native costumes with different languages but greeting all with smiles and in a lot of cases, hugs. It was like the largest family reunion on earth. Some had not seen each other for over 3 years, others had never met because it was their first conference, but all were happy and excited to be together with women who had so much more in common than not. The spirit that permeated the first arrival continued throughout the 4 days of our celebration.



By Hon. Marcella A. Holland  
Baltimore, MD

Prior to the official start of the Biennial, the US and Moroccan women judges were hosted at a reception the evening of May

10th, given by US Ambassador to Morocco Puneet Talwar at the Kenzi Rose. We were welcomed by the Ambassador and IAWJ President Justice Susan Glazebrook of New Zealand; Chair of the Moroccan Conference, Judge Mina Sougrati, and other dignitaries. Our President, Judge Toni Clarke was introduced and recognized and later took photos with many of the dignitaries. Also, for the first time of many, the founder of IAWJ, our own Arline Pacht was recognized and honored in her absence. It was a wonderful networking opportunity for both the US and Moroccan women judges. Many of us saw some of our own members for the first time in many years. The food and drinks were flowing, and all had a good time.

The IAWJ Biennial Opening Ceremony





was as exiting, and at times, as competitive as the Olympics. There was no parade of nations; however, every country came into the auditorium at the Mogador Agdal, a huge and luxurious hotel; staked out their area, in native costume, bearing flags and vocally espousing the pride in their country. The US delegation of 75 women judges had our own type of native costume, wearing red, white and/or blue with flag design scarfs, wristbands and waving little American flags. A few of us had extras – flag earrings, rings and flag designer high heels. It is my understanding we were the third largest contingent present, but we were not the most vocal. It was fun and exciting to switch back and forth watching

and listening to, Argentina and Mexico trade demonstrations of chants and native songs. Then some of the African countries chimed in with their own chants and songs. Before the actual program started, several countries, especially the larger ones, went down in front of the stage and chanted, sang and waved our flags, US delegation included. A fun and inspirational time was had by all. The Opening Ceremony program included greetings from many dignitaries in Morocco and entertainment by a wonderful choral group of women with native costumes and instruments. A luncheon buffet was served outside in a huge garden area and in a few grand ballrooms in the Hotel. The menu contained varieties of Moroccan salads, meats, vegetables and desserts. The networking and camaraderie

continued. After lunch were the regional meetings. Our North America regional meeting room became too noisy for us to conduct business, and after trying a couple of other rooms, our International Director, Lisa Walsh, gathered us together in a foyer and we held our regional elections. Our North America region is entitled to 2 Directors on IAWJ's Regional Board, one from the United States and one from Canada. Our NAWJ International Director Lisa Walsh was elected as the US Director and Justice Mona Lynch, of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia as the Canadian Director.

The legendary IAWJ silent auction began the afternoon of May 11th and ended on May 13th. The room was packed every time.

I went there and on the last day, there were long lines waiting to obtain and pay for the items they won at the auction. Items were displayed by regions like Asian-Pacific, Africa, North America, etc. and items ranged from native artwork and jewelry to clothing like shawls and tops.

The CLE sessions at the Biennial were informative, inspiring and exceptionally well done. In addition to the Opening Plenary Session where a panel of international judges talked about the successes of IAWJ and women judges in general since the last Biennial, there were 6 other sessions. I will highlight 3 of those 6 sessions:

Afghanistan Judges and the IAWJ session was I think the most well-attended and invoked the most emotion. Two rescued Afghan women judges talked about their experiences getting out and their lives since leaving Afghanistan. NAWJ and IAWJ past President Vanessa Ruiz presented via video on the process, successes and failures to help get all the women judges out of Afghanistan and out of harm's way from the Taliban. NAWJ Past President and International Director Lisa Walsh moderated a portion of the program and added to the discussion. Awards and Kudos were given to those who were in the forefront of this struggle, including NAWJ members Vanessa Ruiz, Lisa Walsh, Patti Whelan and Bev Cutler.

Toward More Inclusive Justice was moderated by NAWJ member and past International Director, Lisette Sheridan-Harris. Panelists from 5 countries discussed initiatives designed to ensure inclusive justice for minorities, unrepresented litigants, youth, persons with disabilities, and those who do not speak the language of the court in which they are involved.

Trauma Informed Courts was moderated by NAWJ Past President Bernadette D'Souza. Panelists discussed the types and causes of trauma of both parties and witnesses. A judge from Kenya presented on a project enabled by an anti-trafficking grant in her country and Uganda focused on the impact of trauma on witness testimony and strategies for making courts more accessible to traumatized parties and witnesses.

Every day there were breaks for Morning and Afternoon Tea, (including the famous Moroccan mint tea) with various pastries and treats. There were also transcription headphones for participants to understand those speaking in other languages.

There was a lot of information given and learning opportunities, but there was also some fun and networking time. One great fun networking dinner was held at a place called Chez Ali; a huge complex that made you think you had time traveled to the time of the Arabian Nights. We were greeted as we got off the buses with men dressed in Arabian Knight style clothing on horseback. Many photos were taken with the horses and their riders. There were various Berber "tribes" in native outfits dancing and singing for our enjoyment and participation. We roamed through the huge replica of ancient gates and found tables along a giant circular open-air arena, in

which later various Fantasia and equestrian acrobatic acts were held and Camel rides were offered. We were served traditional Moroccan dishes like roasted lamb, chicken Tagine, salads and vegetables. Of course, there were sweet desserts, too. We arrived in the late afternoon and were there for a beautiful sunset and the colorful lights that came on at night. It was a wonderful Moroccan Arabian Nights evening. In addition to our evening fun, the attendees were also taken for a tour of the Palais de Justice, the high court in Morocco. Many went on guided and unguided tours of the Medina and the Sooks. Lots of shopping was done.

Of course, a major highlight of the Conference was the Gala Dinner held the evening of May 13th. The outdoor gardens and pool area of the Kenzi Rose were beautiful with some country flags marking their tables and festive decorations. This was the opportunity for judges to show off their fancy evening native country attire, to dance around, sometimes in a conga line, take lots of photos, give hugs and say farewell to old and new friends. After dinner attendees moved inside for a brief program and more dancing.

The next morning, Sunday, May 14, it was back to business. The General Meeting of IAWJ was called to order. We heard reports



on our various programs and projects and the site of the next Biennial was announced – Botswana and Cape Town, South Africa. For the first time we will split the conference with two jurisdictions. The Board will meet in Botswana first with some other activities planned for members who choose to go there and then move to Cape Town for our Plenary Sessions and other usual activities. With that announcement, the delegations from Botswana and South Africa performed songs and dances in a celebratory demonstration of their selection. Other countries joined in the celebration that went on for several minutes. President Glazebrook presented the first of two Arline Pacht Global Vision Awards to Justice Terecita De Castro, retired, The Supreme Court of the Philippines. The second Airline Pacht Global Vision Award was presented by Judge Vanessa Ruiz (virtually) to Judge

Susana Medina, past IAWJ President from Argentina. Her remarks were moving and timely, reflecting the mission and goals of women judges throughout the world. I thought it appropriate to include in this article a portion of her acceptance speech:

“...it is us, the judges – no one else -who, through our decisions, can change the lives of other women, especially the poor, those who have less, those who suffer violence, mistreatment, discrimination and exclusion. And to insure that those excluded from the system, who often have nothing more than their own life, their own existence, which they entrust to our hands, can live a life free of violence and in peace.”

The last piece of business was the introduction of the incoming President of IAWJ by Justice Glazebrook – Justice Binta Nyako from the Federal High Court,

Abuja, Nigeria. Once again, there was a celebration from the Nigerian delegation, other African countries and others who joined in dancing, singing and parading around the conference room. After several minutes, and a video showing scenes of Nigeria, Justice Nyako gave her inaugural speech. She pledged to be the President for all and has an open-door policy. She noted that IAWJ stands for sisterhood and that as women judges we have a heavy duty to dispense justice with a sense of humanity.

As we all started departing Marrakech, there was still that sense of a family reunion, hugs and goodbyes were given to old and new friends. Wishes for safe travels went to all in our sisterhood of women judges around the world. We all heard refrains of “See you in Botswana and Cape Town.”

# District News



## DISTRICT ONE (MA,ME,NH,PR,RI)

Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island

## DISTRICT DIRECTOR: Hon. Amy Blake

Massachusetts Appeals Court

MASSACHUSETTS  
MAINE  
NEW HAMPSHIRE  
PUERTO RICO  
RHODE ISLAND

1

## Welcome to Our New Members

Probate and Family Court Judges **Joan Armstrong** (ret.), **Dana Doyle**, **Randy Kaplan** (ret.), **Jennifer Ulwick**, and **Claudine Wyner** (CT); Juvenile Court **Judge Karen Hennessey**; New Hampshire **Judge Anna Barbara Hantz Marconi**; and Rhode Island **Judge Erika Kruse-Weller**.

## Member Spotlight: District Court Judge Mary Beth Ogulewicz

Judge Mary Beth Ogulewicz is empowering



people beyond her work on the bench. Judge Ogulewicz has been a long term volunteer mentor and tutor for Afghan refugees. She has also worked hard to understand and help address our homeless crisis. Understanding the many challenges people less fortunate face, Judge Ogulewicz has made a selfless and powerful impact on their futures.

people beyond her work on the bench. Judge Ogulewicz has been a long term volunteer mentor and tutor for Afghan refugees. She has

Judge Ogulewicz received her bachelor's degree from Boston College, her Master of Social Work from Westfield State University and her Juris Doctorate from Western New England University. Prior to her appointment to the bench, Judge Ogulewicz, among other things, served as a law clerk to the Superior Court, was in private practice and was a prosecutor in Hampden County. Prior to being sworn in as a judge, she was the Chief of the Elder and Persons with Disabilities Unit at the Northwestern District Attorney's Office.



District Court **Chief Justice Stacey Fortes** said the following about Judge Ogulewicz: Mary Beth sent me Tracy Kidders' book "*Rough Sleepers*" about the unhoused in America. In a note accompanying the book, Marybeth said that there are no easy answers "but the inquiry and effort remains at the center of humanity." Chief Fortes noted that Mary Beth has a true understanding of what it means to be a community court judge -- she makes that inquiry and effort every day.

**Color of Justice**

District Court Chief **Justice Stacey Fortes** had a fantastic turnout for the Color of Justice Program held in the Lowell Justice Center. Middle school girls heard from judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, clerk's office staff, probation officers, court officers, and the most popular speaker: the court interpreter! The students had a tour of the building, sat in the judge's seat, visited the lockup and then had the chance to talk to one on one with the adults over pizza! Each girl received a certificate of attendance and a swag bag that included a book from their summer reading list. Many District One members participated and attended the event.



*Chief Justice Fortes with the Color of Justice participants*

**Law Day**

The Norfolk County Juvenile Court hosted a wonderful Law Day celebration on May 4, coordinated by **Judge Linda Sable**. Sixty high school students from the community of

Randolph attended, along with the Randolph marching band and chorus who performed several fabulous numbers. Our **Attorney General Andrea Campbell** gave an incredibly inspirational speech weaving the story of her background into the themes of public service and the importance of reaching for your goals even in the face of adversity. Randolph students participated in essay and art contests relating to Law Day themes and the winners collected valuable swag. Finally Norfolk Juvenile Court was able to recognize and bestow outstanding citizenship awards to the Randolph Police School Resource Officers, as well as their therapy dog, all of whom were on hand to accept. A great day for the Norfolk Juvenile Court and our community partners. District One members Appeals Court **Judge Amy Blake** and Juvenile Court **Judge Michaela Stewart** joined in the festivities!



*Clerk-Magistrate Ryan, Judge Blake, Chief Probation Officer Vibert, First Judge Joseph Johnston, Attorney General Campbell, Judge Stewart and Judge Sable*

**Getting to know You: Our regional dinners are underway**



*Judges (standing) Amy Blake, Linda Sable, Lee Peterson, Randy Kaplan, Mary Dacey White and (seated) Vickie Henry, Marylou Muirhead and Marguerite Grant*

A great group of women got together at the Cheesecake Factory at the South Shore Plaza, organized by Probate & Family Court **Judge Lee Peterson**. It was a fun night where old friends reconnected, and new friendships were made.

Not to be out done, **Judges Vickie Henry and Pam Dashiell** organized a fun dinner in the "red room" at West Side Johnnies in Boston!



*Judges Marylou Muirhead, Maureen Mulligan, Patty Bernstein, Diane Rubin, Pam Dashiell, Vickie Henry and Amy Blake*

**Members on the Move**

District One is an incredible group of judges who give back both in their court and in the community. We celebrate and recognize these amazing women:

**Judge Karen Green (ret.)** was appointed to the Rule of Law Leadership Council of the World Justice Project.

**Judge Marylou Muirhead (ret.)** will join the full-time faculty at New England Law Boston in the fall.

**Judge Judith Nelson Dilday (ret.)** was honored by BLACK WOMEN WHO LEAD at the Massachusetts State House for her work in "making Boston a better place." Judith will be featured on a banner that will be hung on Blue Hill Avenue.

**Judge Nan Sauer** just celebrated one year on the Probate & Family Court bench! She reports that is "the hardest job I've ever had, and the BEST job I've ever had."



**DISTRICT TWO (CT, NY, VT)**  
Connecticut, New York, Vermont

**DISTRICT DIRECTOR:**  
**Hon. Leslie A. Stroth**  
New York City Civil Court, NY County

CONNECTICUT  
NEW YORK  
VERMONT **2**

District 2 has continued to have a positive and productive year, with membership growing, NAWJ signature programs being held, and our judges finding support in our judicial sisterhood by sharing our common experiences on the bench and exchanging ideas to help each of us dispense justice in the best ways possible.

### District Two Early 2023 Highlights

-Recognition of NAWJ and **Judge Rona Sabawoon** at United Nations' Annual Conference on the Status of Women, March 6, "Let Women and Girls have access to Education" by Int'l Federation for **Peace Sustainable Dev. President Sally Kader**

-The District 2 Mentoring Team's success in assisting Judge Sabawoon and her family obtain asylum, employment, housing and schooling in New York City after fleeing Afghanistan.

-Co-sponsorship of the March 9th Brooklyn Women's Bar Association Foundation "Build and Grow" Women's Professional Conference Networking event.

-“Women's History Month” events across the District, (detailed in 2023 reports on the NAWJ District 2 web page, and in the March edition of the NY “Sisters in Law” Newsletter).

### NAWJ MID-YEAR CONFERENCE

District 2 **Director Leslie Stroth, Secretary Carmen Velasquez, Projects Director Kathy King, and NAWJ member Judge Yadhira Gonzalez-Taylor** participated in the NAWJ Midyear Leadership Conference in Annapolis Maryland on April 20-22, 2023.



*Hon. Kathy King, Hon. Leslie Stroth, Hon. Carmen Velasquez, Hon. Toni Clarke, Hon. Yadhira Gonzalez-Taylor*

### DISTRICT TWO 2023 COLOR OF JUSTICE PROGRAM

On May 10th, District 2 held its 2023 Color of Justice Law Day Celebration Event, “Cornerstones of Democracy: Civics, Civility and Collaboration,” at Monroe College in Bronx, New York, the event's co-sponsor.

Special Guest, ABA **President Deborah Enix-Ross** moderated a panel of distinguished legal professionals as they discussed the law day theme with an audience of over 130 high school students from area schools, with a goal to encourage students to pursue careers in law. The enthusiastic participation of



*District 2 Director Hon. Leslie Stroth, ABA President Deborah Enix-Ross, Hon. Kathy King, Hon. Yadhira Gonzalez-Taylor, Dean Guylaine Harris, J.D., M.B.A., Monroe College School of Criminal and Social Justice*

the students included pointed questions of the panelists about their roles in the legal system, how the current political climate influences civility in the courtroom, and the roles students see themselves playing in the future of the legal profession, the judiciary and the court system.

### DISTRICT 2 NEW YORK JUDGES ALBANY RETREAT

District Two's New York Chapter held its Spring Retreat, “Women Who Wouldn't Take ‘No’ for an Answer on May 7-9, 2023 in Albany, New York. The New York Judges were recognized by the New York State Assembly while in session, received a private tour of the New York Court of Appeals, and had the great honor of meeting Governor Kathy Hochul, New York State's first woman governor.



### DISTRICT TWO DIRECTOR HON. LESLIE A. STROTH APPOINTED FINANCE CHAIR

At the Executive Board Meeting on May 25, 2023, NAWJ President Toni Clarke appointed District Two Director **Justice Leslie Stroth** as Interim Finance Chair of the NAWJ Board of Directors.





**DISTRICT FOUR (DC, MD, VA)**  
District of Columbia, Maryland,  
Virginia

**DISTRICT DIRECTOR:**  
**Hon. Gwenlynn D'Souza**  
District of Columbia Department of Employment Services

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
MARYLAND  
DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA **4**

Congratulations to **Beverly Cutler** who received the Vaino Spencer Award for her inspiring pro bono work. She helps members of the U.S. Military and veterans with naturalization and related immigration issues. She also assists women judges from Afghanistan who are facing challenges reestablishing their lives locally. **Bev Cutler** and **Judy Wheat** recently organized a get together with several Virginia judges to meet the resettled Afghan judges. One of the Afghan judges has found a full-time job in a Virginia courthouse. The other judges are participating in job training and are job searching. On November 9, 2022, District 4 with the Women's Bar Association of the District of Columbia held a Bar to Bench event. NAWJ **President Toni Clarke** welcomed everyone. **Monica Bhattacharyya** - U.S. Court of International Trade, **Bibi Berry** - Circuit Court for Montgomery County, Maryland, **Tanya Chutkan** - U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, and **Deborah Israel** - Superior Court of the District of Columbia spoke about their paths to the bench.

On November 29, 2022, **Tanya Jones Bosier** participated in the Women's Bar Association of the District of Columbia's program entitled Pathways to Leadership: Inspiration from Women in Power.

NAWJ presented a virtual play called "**Full Truth**" written by District of Columbia Office of Administrative Hearings Principal Administrative Law **Judge Paul Handy** with the assistance of several District 4 members on February 15, 2023. The play began when Thurgood Marshall, special counsel for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, is playing poker with his colleagues and learns that the United States Supreme Court has agreed to hear the five cases consolidated into *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*.

Thanks to the cast: Thurgood Marshall- **Fred Carney**, Administrative Law Judge, D.C. Department of Employment Services; Walter White - **Cymonie Rowe Hinkel**, Judge, 15th Circuit Court for Palm Beach County, Florida; Robert L. Carter - **Gwenlynn D'Souza**, Administrative Law Judge, D.C. Department of Employment Services; Vivian "Buster" Burey Marshall - **Tanya R. Kennedy**, Associate Justice, Appellate Division, First Department, Supreme Court of the State of New York; John W Davis - **Paul Handy**, Principal Administrative Law Judge, D.C. Office of Administrative Hearings; Spottswood Robinson & Admissions Officer, University of Maryland - **Tanya M. Jones-Bosier**, Magistrate Judge, Superior Court of the District of Columbia; Voices of the U.S. Supreme Court - **Vivian Henderson**, Judge, Virginia Beach General District Court.

Congratulations to **Angela M. Eaves** who received the Women's Bar Association of Maryland's 2022 Rita C. Davidson Award. Congratulations to **Rosalyn A. Tang** who became the youngest woman appointed to the Appellate Court of Maryland. Kudos to **Pamela J. Brown** who spoke at a Women's Bar Association of Maryland event during Women's History Month.

Elizabeth Gunn was featured in a national program about becoming a Federal Magistrate. Congratulations to **Anita Josey-Herring** who receive the Charles Hamilton Houston Medallion of Merit from the Washington Bar Association on May 6, 2023.

Kudos to those who participated in the reenactment of "Justice Denied: Wards Cove Packing Co. v. Atonio" by the Asian Pacific American Bar Association of the Greater Washington, D.C. Area. Among others, shown

below are **Jennifer Choe-Groves** - United States Court of International Trade, **Gwen D'Souza** - District of Columbia Department of Employment Services, **Kelly Higashi** - Superior Court for the District of Columbia, **Jeannie Hong** - Circuit Court for Baltimore County, **Florence Pan** - United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, **Maribeth Raffinan** - Superior Court of the District of Columbia, **Kenia Seoane Lopez** - Superior Court of the District of Columbia and **Jeri Somers** - United States Civilian Board of Contract Appeals (Ret.). Chief Judge of the District Court of Appeals, **Anna Blackburne-Rigsby**, made opening remarks.



Congratulations to **Cathy Serrette** who received the 2023 Legal Excellence Award from the Maryland Bar Foundation. **Monise Brown** presented the award.



It was great to see all the District Four members in person during the Mid-Year Conference in Annapolis in April 2023. **Maryland Governor Wes Moore** graciously welcomed us at the U.S. Naval Academy. Thanks to those of you who participated in the Planting the Seed event with the University of Maryland and University of Baltimore law students. Special thanks to Julie Weatherly who coordinated the Planting



the Seed program and the specialized courts panel.

Welcome to all our newest members: **Melissa Alvarez, Gayl Carr, Alva Dial, Deborah Greenspan, Jennifer Mack, Andrea McBarnette, Myshala Middleton, and Tina Patterson!** Welcome to **Nafiseh Kabuli**, our newest Afghan judge to arrive in District 4!



**DISTRICT FIVE (FL,GA,NC,SC)**  
Florida, Georgia, North Carolina,  
South Carolina

**DISTRICT DIRECTOR:**  
**Hon. Phinia Aten**  
Magistrate Court of Rockdale County

FLORIDA  
GEORGIA  
NORTH CAROLINA  
SOUTH CAROLINA

5

District Five NAWJ Members traveled to Marrakech, Morocco as speakers and participants at the 2023 Biennial Conference of the International Association of Women Judges held May 10 through May 14. We received a warm welcome from the **U.S. Ambassador Puneet Talwar** to Morocco who hosted an invitation-only reception for convening NAWJ and Union of Moroccan Women Judges our first evening at the Kenzi Rose Garden Hotel. After formal remarks from his Excellency and IAWJ leadership, our guests enjoyed networking and a bountiful array of traditional Moroccan tapas and desserts. We demonstrated a strong presence at the

roll call of nations the following day with 70-plus NAWJ members decked in red, white and blue attire with U.S. flags and lapel pins. Immediately following the call and opening ceremony, **Judge Walsh**, along with her Canadian counterpart, were formally installed by unanimous vote as our North American IAWJ Board Representatives. We received an update on our region's significant humanitarian efforts in the safe extraction and resettlement of Afghan women judges and their families during the last two years. During the plenary session moderated by Judge Walsh, "Afghanistan and the IAWJ," we learned more about the resiliency, courage and challenges of Afghan women judges as well as the extraordinary sisterhoods

forged between them and IAWJ during this critical time of solidarity and support. Other conference highlights included a tour of the Palais de Justice, superb presentations on individualized and vicarious trauma, gender-based cyberviolence, migrant trafficking and inclusive justice and wonderful evening



*District 5 Director Judge Phinia Aten with Moroccan Water Men in Jemaa el Fna Square in Marrakesh*



*District 5 Director Judge Phinia Aten with Moroccan teens sharing homemade tagine and career talk in Ouarzazate*



*NAWJ Members at the King's Palace in Fez with our guide*



*NAWJ at Roll Call of Nations at 2023 IAWJ Biennial Conference*

festivities at Chez Ali and poolside gala at the hotel.

After the conclusion of the conference, I continued to travel and explore major Moroccan cities and cultural sites such as Casablanca, Rabat, Fez, Meknes, Erfoud,

Khamlia, Ifrane, Merzouja and more during the post-conference, guided excursion tour for nine days with a small group of North American judges from NAWJ Districts 1, 2, 5, 11 and 14 and Toronto.

If you have never been to an IAWJ Biennial

Conference hosted and attended by our sister judges from across the globe, I encourage to join us in South Africa in 2025. I am confident that, like me, you will revel in our connectivity and universal interests and celebrate our cultural diversities and court innovations and legal approaches.



**DISTRICT DIRECTOR:**  
Hon. Miriam Perry  
15th District Court, Michigan

**DISTRICT SEVEN (MI, OH, WV)**  
Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia



## 1. NAWJ DISTRICT #7, Celebrating Our Members!

### High Tea with the NAWJ!

NAWJ members gathered in Grand Rapids, MI to enjoy high tea.



*Pictured, from left to right: Kevin Martin, Hon. Jacquelyn McClinton, Hon. Annette Smedley, Hon. Miriam Perry, Zenell Brown, Hon. Lisa Martin, and Hon. Deborah McNabb*

**Governor Gretchen Whitmer** announced the appointment of Judge Julie Gafkay on April 26th to fill the vacated seat for the 10th Circuit Court. **Judge Julie Gafkay** has been a longtime member of the NAWJ and served her Saginaw community as an acclaimed attorney. Judge Gafkay



*Judge Julie Gafkay has been appointed to the 10th Circuit Court serving Saginaw County.*

was featured in the 2012 Women In Law by Michigan Lawyers' Weekly, joined the Michigan SuperLawyers from 2011-present, in 2015 was selected for top 50 Women Lawyers in Michigan by SuperLawyers, and won the community service award by the Saginaw County Bar Association; SBM Champion of Justice in 2019. The NAWJ celebrates the success of our wonderful member Judge Julie Gafkay in this important appointment.

### Judge Michelle Rick Gives Commencement Speech

NAWJ Member, **Judge Michelle Rick** gave a powerful commencement speech for the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law Graduation. Judge Rick served as a trial judge for the 29th Circuit Court from 2007 through 2020. She was then elected to the Michigan Court of Appeals in November 2020, representing the 4th Judicial District. Rick also serves as an adjunct professor at Detroit Mercy Law. She is also the Vice President of Districts for the National Association of Women Judges.



*Judge Michelle Rick, Commencement Speaker at the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law graduation*

In 2022 Judge Michelle Rick was awarded the Vaino Spencer Leadership Award. Watch her full commencement speech [here](#).

### Retirement of Ms. Zenell Brown, Esq.

**Ms. Zenell Brown's** career has been one dedicated to service. She started as a paralegal and served as an Executive Administrator. Zenell is a member of the Institute of Court Management, the Michigan Judicial Institute, and the Michigan Women Lawyers' Leadership Academy. She has spent her career sharing knowledge with the next generation of lawyers and legal professionals. As a leader in justice administration and diversity, Zenell has received the ABA Robert Yegge Award, the National Association for Court Management Linda Perkins Award, and the National Sojourner Truth Award in 2021. Judge Zenell B. Brown also published "Coffee and Conversations: Inclusion and Belonging" during the pandemic. The legacy of Zenell B. Brown's legal career lives on with the next generation of lawyers and the NAWJ hopes she has more time for her



creative passions of writing, painting, and creating mixed media art. A huge congratulations to Ms. Zenell B. Brown!

*Ms. Zenell Brown, celebrating her retirement from the 3rd Circuit Court*

### Congratulations to Judge Elizabeth Gleicher, 2023 Jean L. King Leadership Award Recipient!

**Judge Elizabeth Gleicher** began her legal career as an attorney in private practice



for 27 years. She worked at Goodman, Eden, Millender & Bedrosian in Detroit then opened her own litigation practice in 1994. She shared her legal knowledge with the next generation as an adjunct professor at Wayne State University Law School. In 2007, Gleicher was appointed to the Michigan 2nd District Court of Appeals. She won her re-election for that position in the fall of 2018. She is a fellow with the International Society of Barristers and a fellow with the American College of Trial Lawyers. She won the 2005 Respected Advocate Award, Michigan Defense Trial Counsel and in 2001 she won the Champion of Justice Award from the State Bar of Michigan. Most Recently, Judge Elizabeth Gleicher won The Women Lawyers



Association of Michigan 2023 Jean L. King Leadership Award!

*Judge Elizabeth Gleicher, Michigan 2nd District Court of Appeals*

**2. WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!**

District # 7 has added several new members, and we are happy to include four of them below. We look forward to working with all of you in the coming months and years. Welcome to the leading voice for women in the judiciary!

**Law Clerk Jessica Hoyer, Michigan Court of Appeals**

**Attorney Jessica Hoyer** majored in sociology with a concentration on feminist political theory at Marygrove College before completing Law School at Wayne State University. Hoyer worked on the Sexual Assault Kit Task Force for the Wayne County Prosecutor’s Office in 2015, she served as a student lawyer with Wayne Law’s Disability Clinic, and she was awarded the Peggy Browning Summer Fellowship working with the United Auto Workers International Union at its Detroit headquarters. We are grateful



*Attorney Jessica Hoyer*

for the experience and perspective Attorney Jessica Hoyer brings as a new NAWJ member!

**Judge Alexis G. Krot, 31st District Court**

**Judge Alexis G. Krot** received a bachelor’s degree from Tulane University, her M.B.A. from the University of Detroit Mercy, and her J.D. from Loyola University. Before serving as a Judge, Krot worked as a magistrate for the 31st Judicial District Court and an assistant city attorney. She also had a family law practice. Judge Alexis G. Krot was appointed to serve on the Michigan 31st District Court on August 4th of 2016. She went on to win her election on November 3, 2020, securing



*Judge Alexis G. Krot*

her position as a Judge for the 31st District Court through January 1, 2027. We are excited Judge Alexis G. Krot has joined the NAWJ!

**Judge Annette Smedley, 14th Circuit**

**Judge Annette Smedley** received her undergraduate degree from Grand Valley State University and her J.D. from Western Michigan University’s Thomas M. Cooley Law School. As an attorney, Smedley focused on criminal defense work and later served as a felony public defender for Mason County.



*Judge Annette Smedley*

In 2012 Judge Annette Smedley was elected to the 14th Circuit Court. We are honored to welcome Judge Annette Smedley to the NAWJ!

**Judge Jennifer Dawn Towell, Summit County Court of Common Pleas**

**Judge Jennifer Dawn Towell** served as a Judge Advocate General’s Corp Lieutenant in the US Navy where she was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal and the National Defense Service Medal. Back home, Judge Jennifer Dawn Towell worked as a corporate litigation attorney then as a magistrate in Akron Municipal Court. Dawn also served as a “Connect” Developmental Disability Advisory Board member. Since the fall of 2022, Judge Jennifer Dawn Towell



*Judge Jennifer Dawn Towell*

continues to serve on the Court of Common Pleas in Summit County. We are honored to welcome Judge Jennifer Dawn Towell to the NAWJ!





**DISTRICT NINE (IA, MO, WI)**  
Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin

District Nine (IA, MO, WI)  
**Hon. Karen Romano**  
Iowa District Court

IOWA  
MISSOURI  
WISCONSIN

9

Successful Color of Justice Program. On March 7, 2023, District 9 hosted the Second Annual Color of Justice event in Des Moines, Iowa. **Judge Celene Gogerty** was the moving force in organizing this event. Thirty-three amazing students from Des Moines Public Schools Central Academy were inspired by panel discussions regarding attending law school and beyond. This event was co-sponsored by NAWJ District 9, Des Moines Public Schools, Drake University College of Law, and the Iowa State Bar Association. Attorney **Anjela Shutts**, a past-president of the Iowa State Bar Association was invited to

join the planning committee and she secured funding from the ISBA. Lawyers, judges, law school staff (including the dean), and law students provided inspiration. The statewide newspaper, the Des Moines Register, covered the event as well. In addition to the panels, the students were able to speak with lawyers and judges one-on-one over a provided lunch. Lastly, the students received swag including a custom designed Color of Justice t-shirt. Below is a photo, a link to the Register article, and the image from the t-shirt.

## Roadways to the Bench

U.S. Magistrate **Judge Celeste Bremer** is working with the Roadways to the Bench program through the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. She attended the April 3, 2023 program held in Minneapolis. Judge Bremer hopes to bring the program to Iowa in the future. The flyer from the program contained the following summary:

On April 3, 2023, the federal judiciary will hold its second nationwide Roadways to the Bench event as part of the Strategic Plan for the Federal Judiciary to achieve its goal of a judiciary “comprised of a diverse complement of highly competent judges, employees, and CJA attorneys.”

Interested lawyers and law students are invited to observe a national live-streamed panel discussion followed by local roundtable discussions with bankruptcy, magistrate, district, and appellate judges about pathways to the federal bench.

The national panel, which will be moderated by **Judge Carl E. Stewart** (5th Cir.), is comprised of **Judge Stephanie Dawkins Davis** (6th Cir.), who previously served as a district judge from 2019 to 2022 and as a magistrate judge from 2016 to 2019; **Judge Laura Taylor Swain** (S.D.N.Y.), who previously served as a bankruptcy judge from 1996 to 2000; **Bankruptcy Judge Kesha Tanabe** (Bankr. D. Minn.); and **Magistrate Judge Mustafa T. Kasubhai** (D. Or.).

The first Roadways to the Bench event was held in 2019. Ten lawyers who attended that event are now federal judges.



*This article appeared in the Des Moines Register on March 10, 2023. (online on March 8, 2023) <https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/2023/03/07/at-color-of-justice-event-students-of-color-explore-careers-in-law/69978108007/>*



**DISTRICT TEN (KS, MN, NE, ND, SD)**  
Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, North  
Dakota, South Dakota

**DISTRICT DIRECTOR:**  
**Hon. Rachel Pickering**  
Shawnee County District Court, Topeka, Kansas

KANSAS  
MINNESOTA  
NEBRASKA  
NORTH DAKOTA  
SOUTH DAKOTA

10

### Kansas:

On January 11, 2023, **Chief Justice Marla Luckert** of the Kansas Supreme Court presented the State of the Judiciary Address to the Kansas executive and legislative branches.

### Minnesota:

On January 9, 2023, Governor Walz appointed **Kristi Stanislawski** to the Tenth Judicial District. Stanislawski was an attorney at Jovanovich, Dege & Athmann, PA. Her practice included “serving as the lead prosecutor for the cities of Cold Spring, Richmond, Kimball, and St. Stephen, as well as representing private clients in civil and family matters. She previously worked as a staff attorney for Minnesota’s attorney licensing boards, as an associate attorney for Rajkowski Hansmeier Ltd., and was a law clerk for the **Honorable Jay Mondry** in the Ninth Judicial District. Her community involvement includes serving on Central Minnesota Legal Service’s board of directors and volunteering with the Children’s Law Center and the Stearns/Benton County Pro Bono Legal Clinic. Stanislawski has served in various leadership roles with the Minnesota Women Lawyers Central Chapter and the Seventh District chapter of the Minnesota State Bar Association. She also serves on the board of the St. Michael-Albertville Girls Basketball Association and as a coach for the St. Michael-Albertville fifth-grade girls traveling team. She earned her B.A. from Winona State University and J.D. from Hamline University School of Law.”

On January 18, 2023, **Hon. Patricia J. Milum** was re-appointed to the Workers’ Compensation Court of Appeals. On February 1, 2023, Governor Walz announced the appointment of Debra

Goehler as district court judge in the Third Judicial District. She previously worked as the executive director of Legal Assistance of Olmsted County, an attorney in private practice representing clients in family law matters, and a judicial law clerk for the **Honorable Gerard W. Ring**. Her community involvement includes serving as a member of the Juvenile Law Committee at the Minnesota County Attorneys Association and as secretary of the Next Chapter Ministry Board of Directors. She has also volunteered for the Rochester Public Schools and for the Honors Choirs of Southeast Minnesota. She earned her B.A. from the University of Wisconsin, Madison and J.D. from Hamline University School of Law.”

On March 24, 2023, Governor Walz announced the appointment of **Sarah Hudleston** as district court judge in the Fourth Judicial District. Hudleston was an assistant United States attorney in the Violent and Major Crimes Section of the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Minnesota. Hudleston was previously a law clerk to the **Honorable Ann D. Montgomery** and an attorney at Robins Kaplan Miller & Ciresi and Fried Frank Harris Shriver & Jacobson. Her community involvement includes serving as a volunteer for the U.S. District Court’s Open Doors program, a mentor for students in the University of St. Thomas School of Law Mentor Externship Program, a volunteer with the Innocence Project, and a former board member of the Volunteer Lawyers Network. Hudleston is a two-time recipient of Tubman’s Attorney of the Year Award for her pro bono representation of domestic violence victims and indigent family law clients. She earned her B.A. from the University of Wisconsin - Madison and J.D. from the University of Minnesota Law School.”

On March 29, 2023, Governor Walz announced the appointment of **Tori Stewart** to the First Judicial District Vacancy. Tori Stewart was an assistant county attorney in Dakota County. She was previously an assistant county attorney in Rice County, where she prosecuted all levels of criminal offenses, and an associate attorney at Hughes & Costello. Her community involvement has included serving on the Minnesota DWI Task Force; the Dakota County Attorney’s Office Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Alliance; the Minnesota County Attorney’s Association Impaired Driving Educational Alliance; and the Minnesota State Bar Association Public Law Section’s Executive Council. She has also volunteered as a mock trial judge with the Minnesota High School Mock Trial Program. Stewart earned her B.A. from the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities and her J.D. from William Mitchell College of Law.”

### Nebraska:

On January 5, 2023, **Governor Pillen** began his first term as governor. We look forward to sharing news of Governor Pillen’s future judicial appointments.

### North Dakota:

On March 10, 2023, **Hon. Constance Cleveland** celebrated her formal investiture when she took her oath of office in the Cass County Courthouse. She serves as a district court judge in the East Central Judicial District, located in Fargo, North Dakota. Last November, Judge Cleveland was elected to this judicial position. Prior to taking the bench, Cleveland worked in the Burleigh County State Attorney’s Office from 1989 to 1991. Starting in 1991, she worked at the Cass County State Attorney’s Office and focused on child welfare.



Judge Cleveland's investiture speech was inspiring. She spoke of the many times that she unsuccessfully ran for judge: "Each time I was not successful, it hurt. I can't say that it didn't. But I learned so much. I analyze my own experiences. I saw new ones. That's what I did next. And I learned from the experiences of those who were successful."

Lastly, I participated in the NAWJ Midyear Leadership Meeting.



**DISTRICT ELEVEN (AR, OK, TX)**  
Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas

**DISTRICT DIRECTOR:**  
**Hon. Gina Benavides**  
13th Court of Appeals, Texas

ARKANSAS  
OKLAHOMA  
TEXAS

11

On April 25, 2023, NAWJ participated in Texas Women's Day recognizing all of our women jurist of our great State of Texas. A proclamation was heard and voted by all members of the Senate in particular lawyers and all females recognizing our first women jurist throughout our state and the accomplishments that we are making in the judiciary. After the proclamation, NAWJ hosted a reception at the Texas State Bar of Texas.

The sixteenth annual Color of Justice program was held on April 12, 2023 at UT School of Law. The event was sponsored by the NAWJ in partnership with the Travis County Women Lawyers Association, and the UT School of Law William Wayne Justice Center for Public Law. The event was attended by students from Travis High School students and Bertha Means Sadler Young Women's Leadership Academy. NAWJ members **Sr. Judge Orlanda Naranjo**, former judge of the 419th District Court, **Justice Gisela Triana**, Third Court of Appeals, **Judge Maria Cantu Hexsel**, 53rd Civil District Court, **Judge Selena Alvarenga**, 460th Criminal District Court, and **Judge Raul Gonzalez**, JP Precinct 4 all participated in a panel discussion.

Every year NAWJ awards a \$1,000 "Access



to Justice" Scholarship to a student who has demonstrated a commitment to public interest law. **Sr. Judge Naranjo** presented **Emani Brown**, a second year law student at the University of Texas, with the scholarship due to Brown's demonstrated and passionate commitment to public interest law. She captivated the audience when she shared her story and her personal struggles with dealing with her father being in prison, being raised by a single mom, being bi-racial, and financial struggles. She demonstrated what commitment, perseverance really means if you want to attain your goal.

A special thanks to TCWLA, Graves Dougherty Hearon & Moody, Jackson Walker, Elissa I. Henry and Luna Law Firms for also sponsoring the luncheon for the judges,





attorneys, and law students who sat with the students to give them an opportunity for a more personal connection.

And on May 4th, Laredo had their Color of Justice program lead by our very own **Judge Becky Palomo**. More details to follow but here are some great photos.



**DISTRICT THIRTEEN (AK, HI, ID, MT, OR, WA)**  
Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana Oregon, Washington

**DISTRICT DIRECTOR:**  
**Hon. Bride Seifert**  
Homer Superior Court, Alaska



Welcome newest members: **Judge Stacie Beckerman**, Portland, OR; **Judge Adrienne Nelson**, Portland, OR; **Anita Booker-Hay**, Olympia, WA

District members recently hosted a very successful Color of Justice program.



Members also attended a Diversity Luncheon moderated by former NAWJ president retired Justice Dana Fabe, featuring bestselling author Qian Julie Wang, 9th Circuit Court of Appeals **Judge Morgan Christen**, and civics leader and entrepreneur **Eleanor Andrews**. At the end of May, **Judge Pam Washington**, NAWJ's Vice-President of Publications, along with **Judge Jo-Ann Chung**, hosted a meet and greet at a local women-owned cycle and fitness store. A good time was had by all.



Speaking of good times, we hope that our District 13 members show up in force to the Annual Conference in Indianapolis. It's a great way to connect, learn and re-energize your love for the rule of law. See you there!



**DISTRICT FOURTEEN (CA, NV)**  
California, Nevada

**DISTRICT DIRECTOR:**  
**Hon. Pennie McLaughlin**  
Superior Court of California, San Diego County



District 14 added several new members in 2023 and we continue to do outreach to grow. Our members have participated in numerous panels at the local, statewide, and national level over the past several months. Through

this work, they serve as leaders in their legal communities and enhance the NAWJ.

In this issue, we decided to highlight a wonderful NAWJ program in its 4th year

and one that originated in San Diego, CA. The Co-Chair of this event, NAWJ member **Attorney Lauren Woon**, penned the article below on the NAWJ Women's Resource Fair for incarcerated women:

## Volunteers Provide Female Inmates With Access to Resources at Las Colinas Detention and Reentry Facility

Santee, California – May 5, 2023 - The Las Colinas Detention and Reentry Facility recently held an uplifting event aimed at empowering and supporting female inmates. Co-chaired by NAWJ members San Diego Superior Court **Judge Pennie McLaughlin** and Superior Court Staff Attorney **Lauren Woon**, the event brought a variety of resources and positive encouragement to the lives of these women.

The initiative aimed to create a conducive environment for personal growth among the inmate population by providing them with resources to set them up for success upon their release. In its fourth year, volunteers from various agencies and organizations once again collaborated to participate in this resource fair. Female inmates enthusiastically learned from volunteers about the diverse range of services and

to get help with navigating food assistance and childcare programs, job readiness training opportunities, and how to access mental and physical health services. NAWJ members **Sherry Thompson-Taylor** and **Commissioner Deborah Cumba** attended the event on-site to show their support and to help connect soon to be released women with necessary services in the community.



*Commissioner Deborah Cumba, Superior Court Attorney Lauren Woon, Judge Sherry Thompson-Taylor and Judge Pennie McLaughlin*



*NAWJ member Deputy Public Defender Patricia Taitano-Valdovinos, left, with her colleagues to help women clean up their criminal records upon release.*


The Las Colinas facility reentry services department provided feedback following the event: “The ladies really loved the event and got a lot of valuable information that will really help them with their reentry plans! It



*NAWJ members with Las Colinas Jail Reentry Supervisors*

helpful tools available to them, including information on how to get an advanced education, how to find legal assistance, how

was also amazing to see all the providers exchanging information and collaborating!”



**DISTRICT SIX (AL, LA, MS, TN)**  
Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee

**DISTRICT DIRECTOR:**  
**Hon. Jennifer Smith**  
Division IV, Criminal Court, 20th Judicial District, Nashville, Tennessee


6




**DISTRICT EIGHT (IL, IN, KY)**  
Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky

**DISTRICT DIRECTORS:**  
**Hon. Patrice Ball-Reed**   **Hon. Julie Verheye**  
Cook County, Chicago, Illinois   St. Joseph Superior Court, Indiana

8



**DISTRICT TWELVE (AZ, CO, NM, UT, WY)**  
Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming

**DISTRICT DIRECTOR:**  
**Hon. Colleen Clark**  
Arapahoe County Court, Colorado

12

The success of this volunteer initiative at the Las Colinas Detention and Reentry Facility serves as a testament to the power of compassion, understanding, and second chances. By providing resources and an opportunity for personal growth, the event aimed to contribute to the rehabilitation and successful reentry of these women into society.

Judge McLaughlin, Judge Thompson-Taylor, Commissioner Cumba and Lauren Woon are so appreciative of the collaborative efforts between the volunteers and the Las Colinas facility, and they admire the Las Colinas women’s dedication toward making their reentry plans. The event served as a reminder that with support, encouragement, and opportunities, positive change is possible.



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Director of Development

*Planning is an important part of my job. Having a plan to follow allows me to be able to have flexibility when new challenges present themselves or new opportunities emerge. For me, planning equals preparedness.*

*I am eager to hear of your plans as a member of NAWJ. What do you hope to accomplish? Have you a giving plan in mind for this year or next? Have you considered including NAWJ in your estate plans? There are myriad of ways to give back to NAWJ, I'd like to work with you to put together a plan that works for you.*

*Let's chat,  
**Francie***

*Get in touch with me at [fteer@nawj.org](mailto:fteer@nawj.org) or by phone (757) 880-8343.*



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## NAWJ NEW MEMBERS SINCE JANUARY 1, 2023

**We welcome the following new members of NAWJ:**

**Ms. Melissa Andrea Alvarez**, Bloomberg  
INDG, Clarksburg, MD

**Hon. Marsha Amin**, San Diego Superior Court,  
San Diego, CA

**Hon. Joan P. Armstrong**, Probate and Family  
Court, Boston, MA

**Ms. Mytili Bala**, California Court Of Appeal,  
Fourth District, Division One, San Diego, CA

**Hon. Nicole Kimberly Barmore**, Circuit Court  
- Baltimore City, Baltimore, MD

**Hon. Lucia Gisele Bates**, Harris County  
Precinct 3 Place 2, Baytown, TX

**Hon. Stacie F. Beckerman**, U.S. District  
Court, Portland, OR

**Hon. Cathy Ann Bencivengo**, Southern  
District Of California, San Diego, CA

**Hon. Kendra Gabriella Bertschy**, Reno  
Township Justice Court, Department 2, Reno, NV

**Hon. Anita Booker-Hay**, Board Of Industrial Insurance Appeals, Olympia, WA

**Hon. Cristal C. Brisco**, St. Joseph Superior Court, South Bend, IN

**Hon. Judi Calhoun**, Delaware Circuit Court #1, Muncie, IN

**Hon. Gayl Carr**, Fairfax Co. Juvenile Domestic Relation Court, Fairfax, VA

**Hon. Zainab A. Chaudhry**, New York State Court Of Claims, Green Island, NY

**Hon. Rebecca G. Church**, San Diego Superior Court, San Diego, CA

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**Hon. Elizabeth A. Hardtke**, St. Joseph Superior Court, South Bend, IN

**Hon. Karen E. Hennessy**, Massachusetts Juvenile Court, Reading, MA

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**Hon. Janine Highiet**, Stanislaus Superior Court, Modesto, CA

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**Hon. Tara S. Hovey**, 55th Circuit Court Michigan, Clare, MI

**Ms. Jessica Hoyer**, Michigan Court of Appeals, Redford, MI

**Hon. Elizabeth Hurley**, St. Joseph Superior Court, South Bend, IN

**Ms. Kelsea Jeon**, Self-Represented Litigation Network, Arcadia, CA

**Hon. Thomasina Johnson**, Juvenile Court -Massachusetts, Rockland, MA

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**Ms. Stacey A. Kartchner**, Law Office Of Stacey A. Kartchner, San Diego, CA

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What you value in NAWJ now is carried on through your giving.

2

It's easy! You can designate NAWJ as a beneficiary on an IRA or an insurance policy.

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There's the potential to eliminate, reduce or defer capital gains taxes.

4

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5

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**Hon. Alexis G. Krot**, 31st District Court, Hamtramck, MI

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- Hon. Claudine T. Wyner**, Hampden Probate and Family Court, Springfield, MA



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