



December 2023  
District One  
Honorable Amy Lyn Blake

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## **Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Puerto Rico and Rhode Island**

### **Welcome to Our New Member**

**District Court Judge Michelle Fentress** was appointed to the District Court by Governor Charlie Baker in 2022. Prior to her appointment, Judge Fentress was an Assistant Clerk Magistrate in the Suffolk Superior Court Criminal Division. She earned her Juris Doctorate from Northeastern University School of Law and her bachelor's degree from the University of Connecticut.



Judge Michelle Fentress

### **Governor Healey Nominates Three Women to the Bench**

**Superior Court Judge Tracy Duncan** was a Springfield-based attorney who has led her own practice for more than 30 years. She has a B.A. from Lake Forest College and a J.D. from Western New England University School of Law. She is the second person of color to serve on the Superior Court in Western Massachusetts in state history.

**Juvenile Court Judge Audrey Carr Murillo** was an accomplished juvenile justice practitioner and defense attorney, and clinical instructor at Harvard Law School's Criminal Justice Institute, where she taught and supervised law students who represent indigent adults and youth in criminal and delinquency proceedings. She has a B.A. from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and a J.D. from the New England School of Law.

**Juvenile Court Judge Fabiola White** emigrated from Haiti to Cambridge as a child and was raised in foster care. She worked for Massachusetts Probation Services since 2019, first as an Administrative Attorney and then as Deputy Legal Counsel. She has a B.A in Criminal Justice from Lasell College, M.A in Criminal Justice from Suffolk University and a J.D. from Massachusetts School of Law.

## **Judges Receive Training at National Judicial College in Montgomery, Alabama**

### **"The Antiracist Courtroom: Theory and Practice"**

District One members Judges **Joanna Rodriguez** and **Arose Nielsen** were part of a group of Massachusetts Trial Court staff who traveled to the Montgomery, Alabama where they participated in a training organized by the National Judicial College. During the training, participants heard from experts on a wide range of topics including racism in the court system, machine bias in courts, antiracism, and more. The group also visited the historic Tabernacle Baptists Church and courthouse in Selma as well as the National Memorial for Peace and Justice and the EJI Legacy Museum in Montgomery. **Judge Designate Fabiola White** also attended the program.

### **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:

**Federal District Court Judge Angel Kelly** was invited to deliver remarks at the Supreme Court of the United States at a dinner for new United States District and Circuit Court judges.

**New Hampshire Circuit Court Judge Melissa Countway** was nominated by Governor Sununu to the New Hampshire Supreme Court.

**Judge Mary Dacey White** (ret.) sits on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee for NAWJ. This is her second year on this important committee. She is also on the All Rise Committee for Suffolk Law School and is volunteering at My Brother's Keeper in Dartmouth, MA.

The Massachusetts Juvenile Court has launched a Virtual Hub Resource under the leadership of **Chief Justice Amy Nechem** and **Juvenile Court Judge Carol Shaw**. The Hub provides comprehensive and accessible information about the Juvenile Court processes, timelines, and legal framework. It is also scalable with the potential to add content including community resources, programs and services. For more information, here is the link: [Care and Protection Proceedings in Juvenile Court | Mass.gov](#)

**Judges Cat Ham** and **Diane Rubin** have been named cochairs of the Massachusetts Public Outreach Committee. **Judges Michelle Fentress** and **Amy Blake** serve on the committee.

Appeals Court **Justice Kathryn Hand** served as co-chair of the Appellate Bench-Bar Conference sponsored by the Flaschner Judicial Institute.

**Judge Michelle Fentress** embodies "paying it forward." This year alone Judge Fentress spoke to a class of Northeastern University Law students who were completing a social justice program regarding restraining orders, an 8<sup>th</sup> grade class at New Heights Chart School in Brockton, and to the Northeastern University Criminal Justice Student Advisory Council about the justice system and her path to the bench. Judge Fentress attended a Color of Justice program in Lowell, judged a debate among students at the Promise College and Career Academy, spoke with 8<sup>th</sup> grade students from the Ashfield K-8 School in Brockton, and met with students from West and East Middle School as they prepared for their Mock Appeal as part of the Discovering Justice Program and spoke with members of the Plymouth County Bar Association about these programs. Judge Fentress is the co-chair of the Race and Ethnic Fairness Committee of the District Court and presented at their annual conference in topics ranging from selective enforcement to the police use of body worn cameras. She was a panelist for "Careers in the Judiciary" presented at the Boston Public Library, and hosted by the Trial Court. Judge Fentress spoke with the Cape Verdean Women's Association in Brockton and did community outreach to provide information about the upcoming Supreme Judicial Court Restorative Justice pilot programs. She spoke to senior citizens and Stonehill College students about her path to the bench. Finally, Judge Fentress worked with the North Middle, West Middle, East Middle and South Middle schools in Brockton to prepare them for their Mock Trial to be held on December 20, 2023.

Several District One members authored or coauthored articles for the Boston Bar Journal. These include **Judge Julie Bernard** (Some Pitfalls and Perils of Judicial Social Media Use); **Chief Justice Diana Horan** (Comments from the newly appointed Housing Court Chief); **Judge Debra Squires-Lee** (Take A Small Step-Aspire to the Bench-Begin Your Judicial Application); **Judge Sarah Weyland Ellis** (Jury Trials and the Global Pandemic: Lessons Learned About Remote Jury Empanelment). To read these articles and more, here is the link:

<https://bostonbar.org/journal-category/voice-of-the-judiciary/>

Appeals Court **Justice Marguerite Grant** presented "In Case You Missed it: A Law Update" focusing on recent important civil and criminal appellate decisions.

In October, NAWJ member and former NAWJ president, **Chief Justice Amy Nechem** moderated a panel entitled "Making a Difference in the Lives of Children, Families and Communities." NAWJ member **Judge Helen Brown Bryant** participated along with three seasoned Juvenile Court practitioners. The event was held at Suffolk University Law School and simulcast to all law schools in the Massachusetts. The purpose of the panel was to educate new attorneys, third year law students, and attorneys of all levels of experience about the rewarding work of

the juvenile justice and child welfare practice. With the exception of a select few case types, Massachusetts Juvenile Courts are confidential and closed therefore many law students do not have the opportunity to observe without an invitation to do so or by participating in a clinic. We hope to have sparked some interest in this complex area of law. The presentation was organized by **Judge Designate Audrey Carr Murillo**.

District Court **Judge Janine Simonian** served as a faculty member for the Social Law Library's educational program on search and seizure.

**Superior Court Judge Cathleen Campbell** was a faculty member on a panel for Motor Vehicle Stops at the Social Law Library .

Superior Court **Chief Justice Heidi Breiger** has been appointed Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Trial Court.

**Chief Justice Amy Nechem** and **Juvenile Court Judge Carol Shaw** are proud to announce the opening of the Springfield PATHS Family Treatment Court. The program is designed to provide prevention and treatment for the health and stability of children and families.

**Judges Christine Anthony, Lee Peterson and Janine Rivers** were faculty members for MCLE's Motions Practice in Probate & Family Court.

**Judge Marylou Muirhead** (ret.) is finishing her first semester as a visiting professor of practice at New England Law Boston in the fall.

Respectfully submitted,

*Amy Lyn Blake*

District One Director