



June Newsletter and District 14 Report  
Submitted by Judge Pennie K. McLaughlin

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## **1. NAWJ DISTRICT 14 MEMBERS STEP UP TO HELP RESETTLE AFGHAN WOMEN JUDGES, *CALL FOR HELP* IN THE AFGHAN JUDGES' NEW COMMUNITIES**



Ninth Circuit Judge and NAWJ Member Margaret McKeown with Afghan Judge Basira Qazizada, who with the help of the amazing women of the NAWJ will begin an LLM program at Berkeley

Former NAWJ President and Miami Judge Lisa Walsh through the NAWJ and IAWJ, has overseen the resettlement of over 26 women judges who have fled Afghanistan since their very lives were threatened. San Diego Superior Court Judge Nadia Keilani and Los Angeles Commissioner Doreen Boxer have teamed up to help six different teams of Afghan women judges who have settled in different parts of California. These courageous women are in many states and California has become home to many of them. Senior Appellate Attorney Mytili Bala have been actively assisting with the day-to-day practical matters. Commissioner Boxer reported:

*“Since forming in late 2022, NAWJ’s California Teams for Afghan Women Judges has helped our six (soon seven) mentee Afghan judges address many of their needs, achieve important personal and professional goals, and understand how to navigate our justice system. Our mentor pods which include NAWJ members and other allies, work closely with their assigned mentee Afghan woman judge to help her formulate a plan for a successful professional future. We have also arranged for Zoom meetings and webinars with inspirational leaders, essential advice, and to help our mentees build a community.”*



Senior Appellate Attorney Mytili with Afghan Judge Basira Qazizada

These courageous women need our help and luckily through the persistent work of former NAWJ President and former Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Elizabeth White, JAMS has come through with critical funding. Elizabeth recently reported, “**JAMS Foundation** has agreed to provide the Afghan Women Judges emergency relief funds up to \$125,000. Application forms have been developed along with informational material, and with the assistance of the NAWJ mentors, Afghan women Judges may apply for funds for critical emergency needs such as housing, food and medical expenses.”



Judge Basira Qazizada and Commissioner Doreen Boxer, with the feast Judge Qazizada prepared along with Judge Golshan Sawary

### **MORE HELP IS NEEDED:**

#### Alameda County:

Afghan Judges Golshan Sarwary and Narges Berashk are in Alameda County. Both are working to improve their English but would welcome any sort of filing or administrative support position in a court or law firm.

Judge Sharifa Ayubi is studying English but could use a position where fluency is not required.

#### San Bernardino County:

Judge Sweeta Dadras speaks English well and lives in San Bernardino County. Childcare remains a challenge with three young kids, so remote or part-time would be ideal.

#### San Diego County:

Judge Alia Rasouli lives in San Diego County and is also working on her English. She could use work where English fluency is not required. There are NAWJ members in San Diego who can



assist with explaining the details of any position that any of you have available. The financial struggles of these women is significant.

## **2. DISTRICT 14 MEMBERS CONTINUE THEIR WORK ON PANELS AND COMMITTEES**

**NAWJ MEMBER MARIA PUENTE PORRAS, JUDGE, LOS ANGELES SUPERIOR COURT, CONTINUES TO SERVE ON THE CALIFORNIA JUDGES ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE BOARD**



Judge Maria Puente Porras at the California State Capitol with other CJA Board Members

CJA's Executive Board met in Sacramento Monday, May 15 and Tuesday, May 16 for a Board meeting and "Day at the Capitol." The Representatives met with a quarter of the Legislature and discussed pressing issues including remote appearances, court reporters, the Extended Foster Care Program, Military Diversion and the Judicial Branch Budget.

## **3. NAWJ COMMUNITY EVENTS**

**SAN DIEGO NAWJ MEMBERS TEAM UP FOR THE 4<sup>TH</sup> NAWJ ANNUAL WOMEN'S RESOURCE FAIR AT THE LOCAL WOMEN'S JAIL**

San Diego Superior Court Judge Pennie McLaughlin and San Diego Superior Court Attorney Lauren Woon co-chaired this year's NAWJ resource fair. Through this event, the incarcerated women who are within a few months of release were able to meet with agency and local organizations who provide services the women need upon release. Jail Re-entry Supervisor Bridget Wright remarked at the event's close, "The ladies really loved the event and got a lot of valuable information that will really help them with their reentry plans. It was also amazing to see all the providers exchanging information and collaborating."



Re-entry Supervisor Bridget Wright, left, with NAWJ members, left to right,: Attorney Lauren Woon, Attorney Patricia Taitano-Valdovinos, Commissioner Deborah Cumba, Judge Pennie McLaughlin, Judge Sherry Thompson-Taylor and other members of the jail re-entry team, Patricia Ceballos and Rebecca Cardenas

## **NAWJ PARTNERS WITH THE NATIONAL JUDICIAL COLLEGE IN MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

Judge Elizabeth White, Los Angeles, Ret., worked closely with the National Judicial College and was instrumental in the NAWJ's partnership with the NJC in an Environmental Law Course which was presented in Monterey May 8-11. Judge White noted, "A unique field trip to view the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute allowed us to experience the creatures of the deep



ocean floor and hear about efforts to gauge climate change using sophisticated buoys which measure its effects. We were also treated to a cruise by electric catamaran through the Elkhorn Slough to see the sea otter population which is now thriving despite the recent risk of extinction. Top notch faculty in environmental law gave us insight into this rapidly evolving and important field.”



Judge Elizabeth White with a group of NAWJ Members at the Monterey Event





Former President, Judge Elizabeth White, and her husband Bob, out on the catamaran

NJC hopes to make this an annual NAWJ/NJC course. More information will be available on next year's course within the next few months.

#### **4. WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!**

District 14 added several new members, and we are happy to include three 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!

##### ***1. Judge Christine Rodriguez Tyler, Los Angeles Superior Court***

Judge Christine Rodriguez Tyler joined the Los Angeles bench and before long joined the NAWJ. Prior to being a judge, Judge Rodriguez Tyler served as a Deputy Public Defender at the Los Angeles County Public Defender's Office since 2004.



Judge Christine Rodriguez Tyler

**2. Commissioner Janine Highiet, Stanislas County, California**



Commissioner Highiet with her daughter at her swearing-in ceremony

Commissioner Highiet expressed excitement at becoming a member of the NAWJ. Prior to her appointment as a Superior Court Commissioner, she worked as an attorney in civil litigation



defending public entities with a particular emphasis in employment discrimination/harassment and civil rights cases. For the year and a half prior to Commissioner Highiet's appointment, she served as a Stanislaus Superior Court research attorney and pro tem judge.

### **3. *Stanford Law Student Kelsea Jeon***



One of our newest law student members is Kelsea Jeon, who is currently a 1L at Stanford Law (class of 2025). Ms. Jeon is no stranger to the NAWJ, and first became involved as a supporter since 2018, when she first interned for Judge Elizabeth White at the Los Angeles Superior Court. When Judge White was President of NAWJ, Ms. Jeon served as her assistant and helped behind-the-scenes. She exclaimed, "I am excited to officially be a member of NAWJ!" We look forward to many great things from this remarkable young woman!

## **LAST PARTING SHOTS:**

### **From the IAWJ Biennial Conference in Morocco:**

San Diego had a contingent of judges attend the International Association of Women Judges Biennial Conference in Morocco. San Diego Superior Court Judges Nadia Keilani, Cindy Davis, Euketa Oliver, Patricia Garcia met up with former NAWJ President and San Diego Superior Court Judge Tamila Ipema, Ret., and her husband Hank.



Immigration Judge Hank Ipema, Ret., Judge Nadia Keilani, Judge Tamila Ipema, Ret., Judge Cindy Davis



Judges Euketa Oliver, Tamila Ipema, Cindy Davis, Nadia Keilani, Patricia Garcia





Afghan Judges in attendance with Judge Lisa Walsh, back left, and the San Diego Judges