



October 19, 2022
Annual Report from District 6
Honorable Jennifer L. Smith

Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee

During the past year, women across District 6 made great strides in ascending to the bench, excelling in that role, and celebrating ever more cracks in the glass ceiling. These advances provide opportunities to grow and enhance the NAWJ membership. District 6 recruitment from this new cadre of women judges will be a priority in the coming year.

On February 10, 2022, **Honorable Sarah Keeton Campbell** was confirmed during a joint session of the Tennessee General Assembly to be the newest justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court, filling the position formerly held by **Justice Cornelia Clark** and joining **Justice Sharon Lee** and **Justice Holly Kirby** in the female majority on the Tennessee Supreme Court.

On April 5, 2022, more than a dozen Black female judges in Jefferson County, Alabama, gathered in a Birmingham courthouse to support the future **Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson**. Read the full story in the Birmingham Times, <https://www.birminghamtimes.com/2022/04/16-black-female-judges-in-jefferson-county-al-gather-for-historic-photo-support-ketanji-brown-jackson/>



Image by Joe Songer, for The Birmingham Times.

On September 1, 2022, judges across the State of Tennessee began new terms, including 24 new women judges, bringing to total to a record 92! On August 30, 2022, the Women's Political Collaborative of Tennessee held a swearing-in ceremony at the historic Hermitage Hotel—a centerpiece in the final ratification of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution that gave women the right to vote—for Nashville's 19 female judges, a record number for the county. Tennessee Supreme Court Justice Sharon Lee led the oath and swore-in the new judges. Watch the news story here:

<https://www.newschannel5.com/news/record-number-of-women-judges-take-the-bench-in-nashville>.



Photograph from TNCourts.gov

On August 19, 2022, **U.S. District Judge Kristi Johnson** was sworn into office as the first female judge for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi.

District 6 members continue to receive accolades for service and excellence! The **Honorable Judge Robin D. Pittman** received the 2021 Ernest N. Morial Award from the Greater New Orleans Louis A. Martinet Legal Society for contributions to the bench and bar. She also received the Crimestoppers GNO 2021 Distinguished Service in Criminal Justice Award. In addition, Judge Pittman was appointed to serve as a member of the Judiciary Commission of Louisiana and as a member of the Executive Board of the Louisiana District Judges Association.

In May 2022, the American Judges Association (AJA) highlighted the long-time service of NAWJ member **Honorable Judge Sheva M. Sims** of Shreveport, Louisiana. Since her first election to the bench in 2011, Judge Sims has made history by participating in the first Judicial Ride-Along Program at Shreveport City Court, being the first judge in the area to receive the Crystal Gavel and the Judge Benjamin Jones Judges in the Classroom Award.

In September 2022, NAWJ member **Honorable Judge Lynda Jones** of Nashville, Tennessee, was elected by her peers in the American Judges Association (AJA) to serve as Director of the six-state AJA District 7 and to Chair the Specialty Courts section of the AJA. Congratulations Judge Jones!

The **Honorable Judge Angelita Dalton** continues to preside over Tennessee's newest residential recovery court in Nashville, Tennessee, which exclusively serves women. The Women's Residential Recovery Court (WRRC) is a court-supervised residential recovery court program for non-violent justice involved females who are actively participating in a local recovery court in the state of Tennessee and have a greater need for intensive substance abuse and/or co-occurring treatment services.

In April 2022, **U.S. Circuit Court Judge Bernice Donald** received the Judge Elliott Zide Award for Excellence in Judicial Education from the American Judges Association (AJA).



Judge Donald receives award at the AJA Mid-Year Conference in Napa

Welcome to all new District 6 members!

Honorable Cynthia Chappell, Criminal Court Division V, Nashville, Tennessee

Honorable Jennifer Johnson Mitchell, Criminal Court Division X, Memphis, Tennessee

Maia Czarnecki, law student, Vanderbilt University Law School

Juvenile Court Magistrate Carlyn Addison, Memphis, Tennessee

Honorable Judge Toni Terrett, Warren County Circuit Court Judge, Vicksburg, Mississippi, who was recently recognized for her work in the area of domestic violence as part of the Vicksburg Domestic Violence Victim Empowerment Program.

Member Connection and Programming. There is much room for improvement in District 6 member engagement and educational programming. As communities and courts have emerged from COVID restrictions, I expect that more of such opportunities will be available in the coming year.