

COUNTERBALANCE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN JUDGES



United
We Stand

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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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
of
WOMEN JUDGES

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President's Message



It is truly my honor to serve as President of NAWJ. I am humbled by the confidence you have in me to lead this great organization; an organization that is near and dear to my heart. I will do my best to prove worthy of that confidence. I joined NAWJ in 1998 coinciding with my judicial appointment. Never did I think that one day I would be before you as your President.

They say it takes a village. That is what it will take for a successful and productive year. I am excited to work with the NAWJ village: the Executive Committee, the Board, the District Directors, the Committees, Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs, NAWJ members, and last but certainly not least, the staff. It will take a collective effort of us working together to support the NAWJ mission, 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.

I am fortunate to have an Executive Committee and advisory team made up of members whose thorough and considered advice has been invaluable in preparation for my year as President, and that I know will continue during my Presidency. NAWJ is fortunate to have such dedicated soldiers committed to preserving democracy, the rule of law, diversity and inclusion in membership and in the judiciary across the country, and fair and equal treatment of the communities we serve. It is important that what we do as an organization supports and accomplishes our mission, including our internal and external operations. That applies to internal and external operations.

NAWJ is comprised of members across the country. We represent judges from Alaska and Hawaii to Florida, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands; and from Maine to California, and every state in between. We must have policies and

programs that support our member judges in all of our states and territories, including the military, tribal and administrative law judiciary. Working together for the common good of NAWJ as an organization is what we will focus on moving forward. I believe with education, communication, access to information, and constructive interaction amongst members, we can begin that work. It is a work in progress but we have to get started. How you might ask? My theme “Back to the Future - Recognizing Our Legacy and Reimagining Our Future” is how. We have had tremendous successes in the past and it is important to recognize those successes, and for those that continue to be viable, weave them into how we reimagine the future of the organization.

I have witnessed firsthand the commitment and compassion of NAWJ leadership. As many of you know, in the past 18 months the organization reached an inflection point brought on by the pandemic and the 2021 Resolution excluding States from consideration as possible Annual Conference sites due to the California Attorney General's list of states that its employees are prohibited from traveling to. The list is based on laws in those states that discriminate against the LGBTQ community. Indiana was placed on the list 8 months after the Board approved Indianapolis for the 2023 Annual Conference. As a result, we found ourselves in a precarious position. Canceling would have come at great expense and potential exposure to lawsuits for breach of contract. Relocating the conference was not possible due to the significant amount of advanced planning required. After efforts to resolve the issue with the NAWJ LGBTQ Committee did not come to fruition, the Executive Committee made the difficult decision to present a Resolution that would exclude Indiana from the 2021 Resolution, thereby allowing us to hold the conference in Indianapolis. That Resolution was adopted at

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the 2022 business meeting and the 2023 Annual Conference will be in Indianapolis as planned.

We did not come to this decision easily. As part of our deliberation, we recognized how passionately our members feel and took great pains to ensure a thorough, considered, and informed process. In reaching this decision, the Executive Committee considered its fiduciary obligations to NAWJ members and the continued sustainability of NAWJ. We likewise considered the passionate and determined advocacy of our members, including input from our committees and Districts. We also discussed our strength as a national membership organization whose mission, in part, is to support our sister judges everywhere across the country, from north to south, east to west, and all states and U.S. territories in between. We confronted logistical realities and the limited choice of available venues that meet minimum requirements for hotel and functional meeting space, and the impact of California's ban on state-funded travel to 23 states. We recognized that by not going to those States, we are abandoning our sister judges in almost half the country.

I recount the situation not to stir up bad feelings, but to demonstrate the care in which the Executive Committee took in reaching this difficult decision. If nothing else, it demonstrates how misinformation disseminated can potentially divide an organization, and that leadership needs to find ways to better communicate with its members. This is something I hope to address and resolve moving forward. We will appoint an ad hoc committee to address and resolve the issues associated with the 2021 Resolution.

I have lofty goals for the year, and with your help they are achievable. We will have Heritage Month programs, the first of which was presented in November for Native American Alaskan Native Heritage Month. It was a very informative webinar and is now

available on the NAWJ website. I hope to initiate Gavel Talks which is a series of how-to videos designed to be instructional on useful topics and tips to our membership.

I have encouraged the districts to host Coffee, Cocktails and Conversation events (virtual or in person) targeting and recruiting new members to the bench and ultimately to NAWJ. Some districts have already hosted this event. District 4 co-sponsored, with the Women's Bar Association of DC, a Bar-to-Bench event held at the American University Law School. We hosted about 35 attorneys who were interested in hearing our panelists' insight on how to obtain a judgeship. I recommend this program to all of our districts and states.

On January 24, 2023, NAWJ participated in International Day of the Endangered Lawyer which included judges this year. The focus country for this event was Afghanistan. NAWJ presented a program featuring the Afghan women judges. We hope you were able to join us for this momentous event.

To better serve our members we will look at improvements and updates to the Website, better communication with members, evaluating the structure and pricing of the Annual Conference, and improve on highlighting the valuable work and support of our Resource Board, the Districts and Committees.

Many of you answered the call for volunteers for committees. The assignments are complete and many have scheduled or have already had meetings. I thank you for the remarkable turnout and the demonstrated commitment to the success and sustainability of NAWJ.

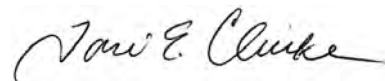
We will get back to basics, starting with leadership. It is important that all of us understand our governance documents and policies: the Bylaws, the Mission statement, the Strategic Plan, the Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan and Policy Statement, and the

Committee Chairs and District Directors Guidelines. We will work on ways to make sure that all governance information is communicated to the membership. I firmly believe that if our members understand the governing documents that control the decisions of the Executive Committee and the Board, they will better understand why we make the decisions we do.

Lastly, our Midyear meeting will be in beautiful Annapolis, Maryland April 20-22, 2023, at the Graduate Hotel, and will be a Governance and Leadership Conference. The current leadership is expected to be there because we will have a Board meeting as required under the Bylaws. Past presidents, past NAWJ leaders, future NAWJ leaders and ALL NAWJ members will be invited and welcomed to attend. During the conference, with the assistance of a facilitator, we will focus on our governance, and have open and constructive conversations about how we operate, what is working, what is not, and how we should move forward. Included in the discussion will be a review of our Strategic Plan, spending time evaluating it and determine what we have accomplished, what is left to be done and update the plan. There will be fun stuff too as Annapolis has plenty of shops, restaurants, and sites. We might even throw in a crab picking lesson!

As you see, I have an ambitious agenda. I cannot do it without you, NAWJ members. I welcome your comments and suggestions. Some of you may be drafted for projects or programs. Please take my calls and answer my e-mails.

Again, thank you for your support and confidence. I will do my best to be worthy of your trust.



Judge Toni E. Clarke (Ret.)

NAWJ President

President@nawj.org

Vice President of Publications Message



This Winter Counterbalance issue is reflective of NAWJ's return to life post-pandemic, without masks, Zoom, and social distancing restrictions. The article *All Rise! Here comes the judges!* paints a beautiful picture of our exciting post-pandemic high-energy return to the best of conference gatherings. Detroit was NAWJ's victory dance! If you missed the fun, the article will take you there and if you were in Detroit, enjoy reminiscing. The Districts are reporting on returning to in-person NAWJ signature programs and are busy being the heart, hands, and feet of NAWJ. Do not miss the District News.

This issue is a perfect introduction of NAWJ President Judge Toni Clarke's *Back to the Future: Recognizing Our Legacy and Reimagining Our Future* theme for her presidency. President Clarke lays out her goals for the year, fun new programs to engage the membership and the Resource Board, and she invites us to join her at the Mid-Year Conference in beautiful Annapolis as we review NAWJ's leadership structure. This issue places a spotlight on the Military & Veteran Judges committee in an introduction piece submitted by committee co-chair Judge Kirsten Brunson. The Military & Veteran Judges committee is one of 25 active committees championing the vision, mission, and work of NAWJ. Judge Brunson invites you to join the work of educating the judiciary on how involvement in the courts affects service members, veterans, and their families. Speaking of veterans, Retired USAF Colonel Linda Murnane takes us on an incredible journey in *Finding Fulfillment in the Second Chapter of a Judicial Career*. It is a must read.

In this issue I have written an opinion piece entitled *United We Stand*. President Toni Clark spoke about standing united in her first Board meeting as president and it provided inspiration for the theme and cover of this Counterbalance issue. *United We Stand* is a piece that

acknowledges and affirms NAWJ's bond of unity and how it has proven to be unbreakable. I dedicate the article to the courageous leadership of the Honorable Past President Judge Karen Donahue who steered NAWJ through turbulent waters with great care and commitment to maintaining our bond of unity.

Finally, this issue is an ode to our dear friend, mentor, and big sister Judge Judy Chirlin. The article *Judge Judy Chirlin, A Life Well Lived* submitted by the Honorable NAWJ Past Presidents Judge Tamila Ipema and Judge Lisa Walsh will give us a chance to reminisce together. Judge Chirlin is gone too soon but the legacy she leaves includes all of us in NAWJ and IAWJ who are better humans because of her enormous life, generosity, and passion for every project and person she encountered.

I thank all of our generous contributors to this Winter issue of Counterbalance, including the exceptional work of Laurie Denham, NAWJ's Executive Director, and her skilled team, who piloted this issue to the finish line. It is an honor to edit this Counterbalance issue and ensure it is an authentic reflection of who we are, what we are doing, and our inspiration as members of NAWJ. I will endeavor to follow in the footsteps of my predecessors in safeguarding the highest standards of publication excellence.

I dedicate this Winter issue of Counterbalance, my first issue as Vice President of Publications, to the memory of our friend, Judge Judy Chirlin.

Hon. Pamela Washington
NAWJ Vice President of Publications

“ Judge Chirlin is gone too soon but the legacy she leaves includes all of us in NAWJ and IAWJ who are better humans because of her enormous life, generosity, and passion for every project and person she encountered.”

Executive Director Message



I was privileged this fall to attend three NAWJ programs. Women Moving Forward hosted by the Maryland Chapter, Bar to Bench by District 4, and Color of Justice in New Jersey. It was striking to see the impact our members have on such diverse participants. Serving a broad range of people from high school and college students, to lawyers wanting to move to the judiciary, to women in prison, is impressive, and will keep NAWJ in the forefront in our local districts and nationally.

As you will read on page 7, in November we lost one of our great leaders, Judge Judy, leaving a legacy of decades-long dedication to NAWJ and to her international colleagues. A very generous anonymous donor gave a \$50,000 matching gift to start the Judy Chirlin Memorial Fund. We are halfway to our goal and continue to accept contributions.

We welcomed 158 new members this year and held over 30 local and national events impacting some twenty-five hundred people.

We continue to make significant progress meeting goals of the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan, accomplishing the following objectives:

Education Pillar Objective 1: Review current programs – The Projects Committee reviewed and developed a template for the Color of Justice program and District 2 provided a Resource Guide now available to all members. Objective 3 Database for Districts – District Directors continue to receive a complete list of new, active and lapsed members with contact information monthly.

Membership Pillar Objective 3: Growth and retention emphasizing relevance to women – We held two webinars specifically addressing women: Women Wellness, and Breaking the Judicial Glass Ceiling. We also held an education session focused on retirement life after the bench.

Organizational Excellence Pillar Objective 3: Maximize staff potential – With the hiring of a Development Director, the key roles for management and operations are filled.

Marketing and Communications Objective 3: Improve internal member communication – Weekly email updates are sent to members. A master calendar that includes board and committee meetings was initiated, allowing members access to any meetings. Also, committee chairs present at District Direct meetings to share their activities. Objective 5: Improve external communications – Weekly communications are being sent to an external distribution list of 3,100 people. Social media followers continue to increase year by year.

Financial Sustainability Pillar Objective 3: Increase revenue and attendance at NAWJ events each year. – The 2022 Annual conference saw a 20% increase in attendance and 244% increase in revenue over 2021.

I am grateful to NAWJ colleagues: Francie Teer, Megan Collie, Brian Gorg, and Janelle Mihoc. Each works tirelessly to ensure that needs of NAWJ members are being met, and to provide resources that members need to host successful meetings and events.

Kind regards,

Laurie Hein Denham, CAE
Executive Director

“ “ *We welcomed 158 new members this year and held over 30 local and national events impacting some twenty-five hundred people.*

United We Stand

“Unity to be real must stand the severest strain without breaking.” — *Mahatma Gandhi*

The strength of unity is under attack everywhere in the world today. Just look at the financial, social, political, and religious divisions here at home in the United States. We have had to contend with the “for and against” lines drawn in the sand on everything from the death of George Floyd, rising interest rates, the chaos of the pandemic, vaccines, loss of loved ones, loss of jobs, closed schools, churches, and courts. We as a nation couldn’t agree on any of it. It was as if our innate ability to stand together had been confiscated, or at the very least compromised by the distractions. Before long, disunity became the new normal. As we watched it all play out in our country, disunity was slowly seeping into every part of our lives- at home, at work, with our neighbors, our family, our friends and even in our beloved NAWJ. NAWJ is a group of fair and impartial judges who are experts at resolving conflicts with a judicial temperament that is reflective of our role in the administration of justice. Yet, without warning, we found ourselves in the throes of an internal conflict. Our unity was put to the test.

The strength of unity is in what binds us as people. NAWJ was born with a mission 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 for all. It is the thing that united us in the first place. It is the thing that Justice Joan Dempsey Klein and Justice Vaino Spencer and 100 brave and intrepid women judges

knew we could not accomplish alone or as individuals. They knew we could do it together and that is why today in the United States, NAWJ is the leading voice of women in the judiciary.

This year, NAWJ grew by 158 members. We held a magnificent annual conference in Detroit, Michigan. Detroit gave us an opportunity to enjoy amazing friendships and acquaintances again. We experienced the unity of a professional sisterhood that has been a mainstay in NAWJ over the years. We were reminded, in a city where we could all gather together, that we are stronger together. The unity that had been threatened in Nashville was no longer showing signs of stress. We had survived the severest strain on our bond of unity by the 2021 Resolution banning NAWJ from holding Annual Conferences in states appearing on the California Attorney General’s list. The road to Nashville was a difficult time for NAWJ and in Nashville, our bond of unity began to buckle... but it did not break. No, WE DID NOT BREAK.

Gandhi got it right; the test of real unity is when it does not break. NAWJ’s leadership and membership stood up to the weight of disunity and division. Together we proved that our bond of unity is strong, fortified, and unbreakable. We also learned. We learned that we all have a responsibility to ensure we are locking arms and standing on our shared mission and purpose. We can never lose sight of the very thing that united us. Our unity is real and it is the reason we are still standing. NAWJ is unbreakable!!



By Hon. Pamela Washington



Judge Judy Chirlin

A Life Well Lived

By Hon. Tamila Ipema and Hon. Lisa Walsh

All who ever met her
from near and far
could attest that Judy left
a profound mark
wherever she went.
She was interesting.
She was thoughtful.
She had a generous
fun-loving spirit.

On November 12, 2022, NAWJ lost one of our great ones, Judge Judy Chirlin. We lost a great judicial leader, innovator, and educator. We also lost our dear friend, mentor, and big sister. All who ever met her from near and far could attest that Judy left a profound mark wherever she went. She was interesting. She was thoughtful. She had a generous fun-loving spirit. She was a great raconteur, could command a room and captivate any conversation. For the past 13 years, Judy was instrumental in bringing the world to NAWJ. She developed and ran NAWJ's international judge program through which hundreds of judges from dozens of countries joined us at our NAWJ annual conferences. Her work made our conferences truly unique. Through her efforts, we have forged friendships, reflected on our practices in comparison to other nations, and have imprinted visiting judges with ethical and rule of law principles. Judy's lifelong experience, hard work, and project management both in the

US and abroad set the backdrop for her passion for international cooperation and friendship.

Judy earned her undergraduate degree from George Washington University in 1969, a master's degree from Rutgers in 1970 and her law degree from University of Southern California in 1974. She was the first woman who joined the "Fellows Program" at the Supreme Court of the United States in 1977 and worked with Chief Justice Warren Burger on projects to improve the administration of justice. Judy would recall how it was a big deal when she was accepted as the first woman to

*"One's destination is never a place
but a new way of seeing things."*

— Henry Miller



serve as a US Supreme Court Fellow. She was a trailblazer for women in law. In 1983, Judy joined the firm of Darling, Hall & Rae as an associate in business litigation. In 1985, Judy was appointed to the Superior Court by Governor George Deukmejian. She served as a trial judge until 2009.

During her tenure on the bench, Judy served on innumerable local and national boards, committees, and task forces. Judy most recently served on the Commission on Judicial Nomination and Evaluation (the JNE commission) of the State Bar of CA, where she made recommendations

Chief Justice of California to evaluate and make recommendations regarding the functioning of the Administrative Office of the Courts. She recently joined the Autry Museum of the American West Board of Trustees. Judy was a law instructor at the University of Southern California for 18 years.

She was a past Chair of the Board of the American Judicature Society, a national organization dedicated to improving the justice system. Judy served on the American Judicature Society Program Committee and the AJS Planning Committee for the Future of AJS and the Formation of State Chapters Committee.

Judicate West Foundation, which for many years funded WLALA's "Power Lunch" programs. In 2016, became the Executive Director for the Western Justice Center.

Judy's reach and influence extended around the world. NAWJ members are familiar with Judy's work on the international judge program, bringing judges from around the world to attend our national conferences. Starting in 2001, Judy began her initiative to bring international judges to NAWJ. In 2010, with the generous support of Robert Kauffman, and later, with the support of the US State Department

Judy's reach and influence extended around the world. NAWJ members are familiar with Judy's work on the international judge program, bringing judges from around the world to attend our national conferences..... For decades, Judy worked on international rule of law and judicial training projects. Among the countries where Judy worked on education and training projects are Peru, Chile, El Salvador, Honduras, Russia, Slovakia, Latvia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Serbia, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Turkey, Georgia, Oman, Ecuador, Moldova, Qatar, Libya and Tunisia.

and assisted the Governor in the judicial selection process. She served on the WLALA (Women's Lawyers Association of Los Angeles) Board for over 30 years. She also served on the Boards of California Women Lawyers, the National Association of Women Judges, the International Association of Women Judges, and the American Bar Association's Rule of Law Initiative (ROLI). She was active in both the California Judges Association and California Women Lawyers. She was appointed by the Chief Justice of California as vice-chair of the gender-bias task force and was a member of a blue-ribbon panel investigating problems facing women in prison in California. In 2011, she was vice-chair of a panel to investigate and report on safety and security at LAX. She was also a member of the Strategic Evaluation Committee appointed by the

Attorneys who have appeared before her over the years praised her judicial demeanor, intelligence, and fairness. One attorney commented, "Judge Chirlin is one of the best judges in Los Angeles County. She truly believes that all litigants should be treated fairly, she was courteous and respectful to all parties and that's how she always ran her courtroom." Another attorney commented, "she is flexible but firm in arbitration and is extremely prepared." [Judicate West website] Judy was known to say that the highest compliment one could pay a judge is to say that they are a fair judge. Her reputation reflected that compliment. She was known to be skilled, prepared, consistent, and always fair.

After retiring from the Court, Judge Chirlin became an arbitrator and mediator with Judicate West. She was Co-Founder and President of the

Office of Global Women's Issues and Anita Botti. Judy obtained the funding necessary to bring women judges from dozens of countries to NAWJ conferences. Ten years ago, she forged a relationship with the US State Department's Office of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) and its then-senior officer Shibani Malhotra, to cement her ongoing program to educate international judges at NAWJ conferences. Hundreds of international judges have benefited from our programming and from the opportunity to liaise with our members. The highlight of the program is the "International Tea and Ethics" round table, where we discuss and compare ethical challenges in our jurisdictions.

Judy's passion for international judicial education was not limited to her work with NAWJ. For decades, Judy worked

on international rule of law and judicial training projects. Among the countries where Judy worked on education and training projects are Peru, Chile, El Salvador, Honduras, Russia, Slovakia, Latvia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Serbia, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Turkey, Georgia, Oman, Ecuador, Moldova, Qatar, Libya and Tunisia. In each country, Judy forged relationships and friendships that helped cement the work that she did.

Judy had extensive experience training the judges in Iraq. She was the American Bar Association's representative on a delegation of the International Legal Assistance Consortium ("ILAC") that traveled to Baghdad in August of 2003 to assess and make recommendations regarding what ILAC's member organizations could do help the Iraqi justice system. She taught "Judging in a Democratic Society" to judges from Iraq, a course she replicated in Eastern Europe. Both the Interim Justice Minister of Iraq and the first judge in the trial of Saddam Hussein were participants in her Iraqi courses. While on that mission, Judy left a United Nations office building in Baghdad less than two hours before a suicide bombing that claimed 20 lives and injured at least 100 people. Undaunted, Judy then developed a special course for Iraq's first female judges held in Turkey and Jordan. In March of 2009 she was one of six instructors (the only American) in a course on International Human Rights Law for Iraqi lawyers conducted in Prague. She also worked with US Secretary of State's Office of Global Women's Issues to develop a program in Washington, D.C. for Iraqi women activists.

Judy taught "Train the Trainers" courses on effective methods of adult education in The Czech Republic, Jordan, Georgia, Oman, Ecuador and Moldova. She traveled to Kurdistan and as an international expert in conferences

on "Judicial Federalism" and "Judicial Independence." In March of 2010 she served as Faculty Dean in a "Train the Trainers/Intellectual Property" course for judges and judicial educators from Kazakhstan. She travelled to Libya with ROLI to assess the legal system and identify ABA projects to assist the Libyans in establishing the Rule of Law. In December 2012, also with the Secretary of State's Office of Global Women's Issues, Judy facilitated a week long program in Miami for judges and prosecutors from 12 English speaking Caribbean countries focused on gender-based violence.

Judy served for many years as part of the CEELI Institute. Its founder, Homer Moyer, commented, "Beginning in 1992, Judy participated in more than 20 programs of the American Bar Association's (ABA) Central and East European's Law Initiative (CEELI) and its global successor, the ABA's Rule of Law Initiative (ROLI), activities that she said 'changed [her] life.' Those ventures took her to some 15 different countries—from Russia to Iraq to Qatar to Libya—and to Prague, as a faculty member in a dozen or so judicial training programs at the CEELI Institute. Judy was a long-time, dedicated participant in law reform work, a friend to so many of us, and a true rule of law hero." Dr. Mark S. Ellis, Chair of the CEELI Institute management board, shared that "Judy Chirlin personified CEELI. She believed passionately in giving back to the legal community. She served more time than almost any other CEELI volunteer. Judy even survived a heart attack while serving as a liaison in Bulgaria, but that did not stop her; she was back volunteering within months!" [CEELI website]

NAWJ has conferred many well-deserved honors upon our beloved Judge Judy. She received the "Distinguished Service Award" in 1998, the Mattie Belle Davis

Award in 2005, the Justice Vaino Spencer Leadership Award in 2011, and the Joan Dempsey Klein Honoree of the Year in 2016. Judy received many honors in her home state of California and nationally, including the Los Angeles County Bar Association's 1996-97 "Outstanding Trial Jurist of the Year Award," the "Joan Dempsey Klein Outstanding Jurist Award" presented in 1998 by the California Women Lawyers, and the "Trial Judge of the Year Award" bestowed in 1999 by Consumer Attorneys Association of Los Angeles. She also received the 1999 "Distinguished Service Award" from the National Center of State Courts, the 2002 "Ernestine Stahlhut Award" from the Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles, and the 2008 "Professionalism Award" for the federal Ninth Circuit from the Salut American Inns of Court.

Judy truly loved her family and close friends. She was loved in return. Many shared she was an important member of their families, an important part of their lives. She was there in good times and sad. Judy enjoyed meeting new people, listening to their stories and sharing her own stories in return. Judy was a master storyteller.

In her spare time Judy traveled the world, was a patron of the arts, enjoyed the theatre. She had a lifelong love of horses (and proudly belonged to CA Cowboy Lawyers) and loved her cats. Her family fondly remembers the many Disney adventures they shared.

Judy advocated for those less fortunate. She believed in mentoring, the importance of giving back and helping others through scholarship. Judy was a trail blazer, a role model, and an inspiration for many of us. As we move forward, we hope to continue her legacy, to make her proud.



Finding Fulfillment in the Second Chapter of a Judicial Career

As many of our members know, I was privileged to serve our nation as a member of the United States Air Force for 29.5 years before moving into a new and exciting “second chapter” of my legal career.

My military service included two years as an enlisted member, and 27.5 years as a commissioned officer. As is true with most who have active-duty military service careers, I was reassigned about every two years. Not including temporary duty short trips, that meant more than 15 relocations, including one assignment in Japan and three



Linda Strite Murnane,
Colonel, USAF, Ret.

assignments in Germany. As a result, I got to see much of the globe during my nearly three decades on active duty.

Perhaps the most powerful assignment in my life, however, was a temporary duty assignment that took me to Rwanda as a member of the first Military Assistance Team (MAT); I was sent to Rwanda following the sanction period following the genocide in Rwanda.



My assignment in Rwanda was to work with the then-combined Tutsi and Hutu members of the Rwandan military to discuss the aspects of free speech and free press as they apply in a military environment. Having served my first four years on active duty as a journalist for the Air Force, and later as a military lawyer (judge advocate or JAG) or military judge, my perspectives on the issues were considered to be a “right fit” for the work that the Rwandans asked the U.S. military to assist them with as they worked to bring their nation into unity following the genocide which had occurred April to July of 1994.

What I experienced in visiting five genocide sites in Rwanda, and in working with the people of Rwanda dedicated to bringing their nation to reunification was compelling. There wasn’t anyone I met in Rwanda who had not lost family members to the genocide. I was moved by the efforts to achieve truth and reconciliation by those in the nation. I decided then that I wanted to be a part of the international process intended to hold individuals responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and similar human atrocities in my post-military work.

I began the process of applying to serve on staff with the United Nations at the International Criminal Tribunal for

Rwanda (ICTR) or the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). My husband and I had been in Europe during the fall of the former Yugoslavia and had been directly engaged with efforts to stabilize the Balkans arising from the fall of the former Yugoslavia.

I had been a U.S. military trial bench judge and a chief circuit military judge for nine years at the time at which I began applying to work on staff at the United Nations. While I had considered the possibility of seeking an opportunity to serve as an international judge at one of the international ad hoc tribunals, my research indicated that those positions were primarily reserved for political appointments. As a military member, my ability to engage closely in politics, even local politics in the U.S., was limited by federal statutes which prohibited members of the service from doing more than exercising one’s right to vote. You weren’t permitted to make political donations of the type that might bring you to the attention of a legislator as doing so would violate the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. 7323). As with most military judges, this makes transitioning one’s judicial skills particularly challenging following success as a military judge.



My efforts to engage in a post-military career in the international tribunals focused, therefore, on available staff positions. I believed my extensive practical experience in implementing the provisions of the Geneva Conventions while in the service, including my five deployments in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom and especially my three assignments in Japan and Germany before I became a judge would be of value for those who were charged with the last opportunity for

justice for victims of the conflicts in Rwanda and Yugoslavia.

In the end, it was my connection with my former Deputy Chief Trial Judge, Thomas W. (Wayde) Pittman, however, that resulted in the door opening to allow me to serve as a temporary senior legal officer replacement for Trial Chamber III at the ICTY. I had retired from military service and was employed as the Executive Director of the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights when the call came from Wayde asking if I would consider coming to The Hague, The Netherlands, to fill in as a temporary replacement. It was, for me, a dream come true.



With the permission of the Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky for whom I worked at the time, I left Louisville, KY and traveled to The Hague in the early fall of 2006. What I thought would be a 90 day assignment turned into three years, during which I led the teams responsible for drafting the judgments, decisions and orders for the international judges hearing the cases of Milutinovic, et al, Prlic, et al, and Seselj, and for preparing five other pre-trial matters. After three years, I left the United Nations for a new and equally challenging assignment as the Senior International Attorney for the U.S. Defense Institute for International Legal Studies (DIILS) in Newport, Rhode Island.

DIILS is the U.S. Department of Defense lead agent for human rights and rule of law training in emerging democracies. In that role, I was responsible for a team of six civilian attorneys and a handful of active duty military program managers who organized training teams in human and civil rights to be presented either at our location in Rhode Island or in the host country at their invitation. My initial visit to Rwanda was as an adjunct faculty member with DIILS. I

knew their work and knew how incredibly fulfilling it was to work in that agency.

My stay at DIILS, however, was short-lived as I was asked if I would consider accepting a new and very challenging position at the ICTY serving as the Chief, Court Management Services. After careful consideration, once again we were back in The Hague, where we stayed until 2012. This gave me the opportunity to serve for a short period as the Acting Head of Chambers, supervising all of the teams responsible for drafting judgments for the international judiciary, and a short period as the Acting Deputy Registrar, where I supervised a wide range of services including those responsible for the operation of the United Nations Detention Unit. It was during that period of service that I was engaged in the arrival and in the pre-trial case preparations for Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic.



My time with the ICTY ended in 2012, and I returned home, thinking my United Nations time had come to an end. However, in 2014, a colleague asked me to consider applying for a position as the Chief, Court Management at the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. (STL). As I was then approaching what had been the UN's mandatory retirement age of 62, I thought that applying was unlikely to result in my return to the United Nations. However, as the application, testing and interview process proceeded, the United Nations extended its mandatory retirement age to 65. So once again, in 2014, we found ourselves back in The Hague, serving at the STL where we were involved in the proceedings investigating the role of five persons indicted for the assassination of the former prime minister of Lebanon, Rafik Hariri.

My international tribunal experience

taught me some very important things, later in my legal career. First, *stare decisis* is not a globally recognized concept in the law. Second, my law training, which began at Loyola Law School in New Orleans, LA, had exposed me to extremely valuable insights into the "civil law" versus "common law" legal systems. Louisiana is the only U.S. state which still incorporates "civil law" processes in their system. How fortunate I was to have had that initial exposure, as the international tribunals at which I worked represented a hybrid of the civil and common law systems.

Third, and perhaps most important among my many lessons, the U.S. Supreme Court's decisions, while representing decisions of the highest court in our domestic system, have little application in the international tribunals. My experience as an Urban Morgan International Human Rights Fellow while at the University of Cincinnati College of Law, from which I earned my J.D., exposed me to the critical and core documents relied upon in the tribunals such as decisions of the European Court of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as well as other international decisions and precedents on which decisions of the tribunal relied.

I had the opportunity to work with many gifted and talented legal students, lawyers and those who held law degrees from the U.S. or other nations. Many of those who held U.S. law credentials had never taken or been admitted to a U.S. state, national or territorial bar. This came as quite a surprise during my work with the United Nations.

I also realized that I had the least well-developed language skills of nearly everyone on my international legal team. While I claimed English as a "mother tongue", and had studied seven years in high school and college in Spanish, one year in German, two years in French and a

year in Japanese, my language skills fell far below those of my exceptionally talented legal staff. While at the ICTY, my team was responsible for judgments, orders and decisions issued in some first instance cases tried in English, but my team was also response for 100 per cent of the judgments, orders and decisions issued in the first instance cases being tried in French (Prljic, et al and Seselj). My teams worked in English, French and Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian (referred to as BCS). While at the STL, my teams worked in English, French and Arabic.



The U.S. had one judge on the ICTY, whose primary experience was academic in nature. The STL had no U.S. judges on its court panels.

My next grand adventure will also be in the international judicial community, only this time, I will be embarking on a role as a judge. I am awaiting confirmation by the Nitijela of the Republic of the Marshall Islands where I am anticipating service as an associate justice on the High Court. While again there will be a steep learning curve to ensure I perform my duties effectively, the core competencies of respect for litigants, and others coming to the Court to find solutions to their challenges remain the same across the spectrum. I am honored to find fulfillment in this Second Chapter of my judicial career.

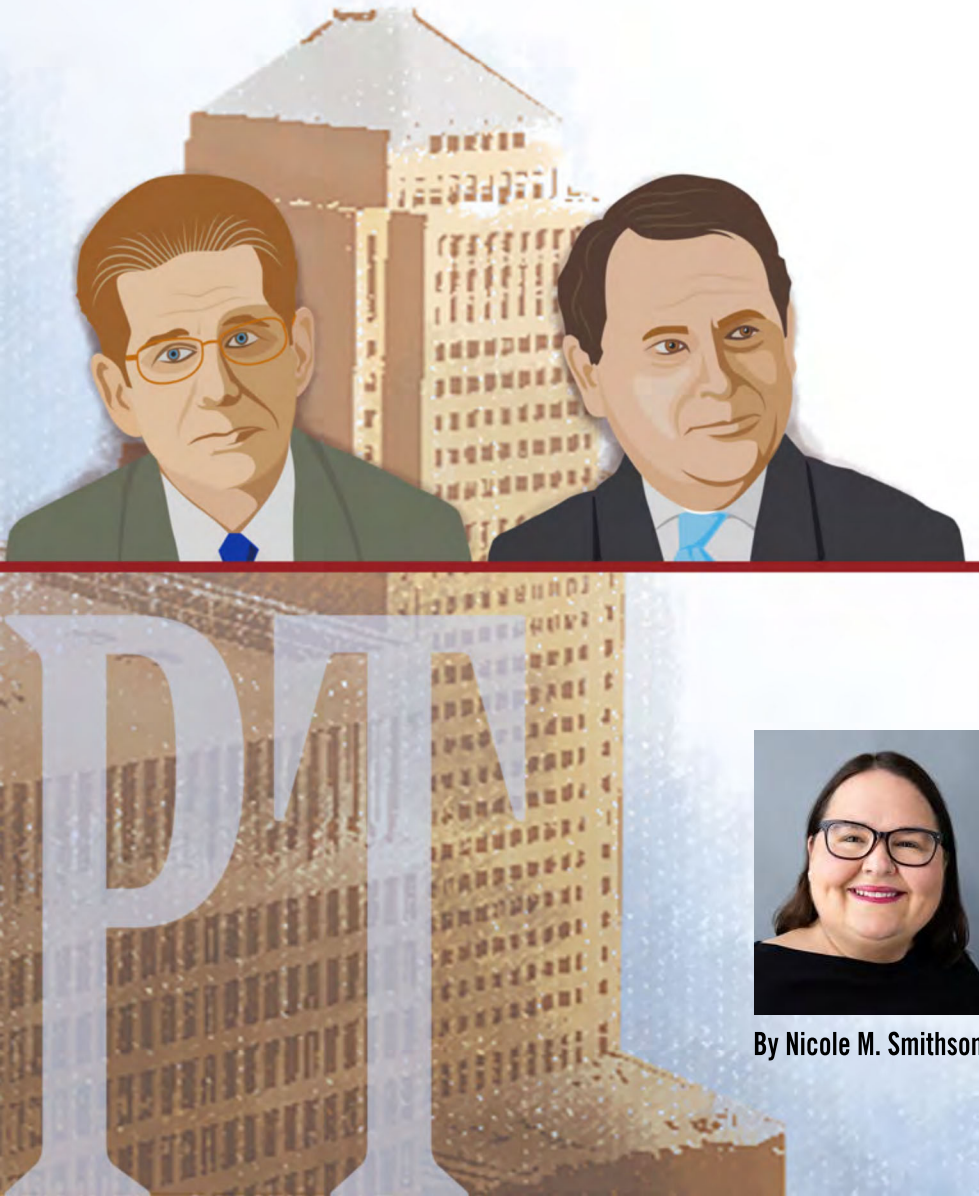


Gradually Then Suddenly:



The Bankruptcy of Detroit

Sam Katz's award-winning¹ documentary, *Gradually Then Suddenly: The Bankruptcy of Detroit*, examines the causes and impact of the largest municipal bankruptcy in American history. The film also introduces the audience to the judge who might have prevented the bankruptcy under different circumstances, the judge who oversaw the bankruptcy, and the judge who orchestrated the "Grand Bargain" to save Detroit's art collection.



The Bankruptcy

At its height, Detroit had a population of 1.8 million people. It also once had the highest median income in the United States. But over time, Detroit's population shrank to roughly 700,000. In addition to a dwindling tax base, Detroit suffered economically due to disinvestment, a declining auto industry, reduced federal and state revenue sharing, and excessive debt. Because of Detroit's financial woes, Michigan's former governor appointed an emergency manager to take over management of the city's operations from its mayor and city council.

When it filed its Chapter 9 bankruptcy petition in 2013, Detroit owed \$18.5 billion. And among Detroit's creditors were thousands of retirees who relied on the city to provide their income and health insurance.

The Judges

Before the bankruptcy commenced, some retirees sought a temporary restraining order (TRO) in state court to prevent Detroit from filing for bankruptcy from Judge Rosemarie Aquilina. The retirees maintained that the Michigan Constitution prevented the impairment of pension rights. But before Judge Aquilina could rule on the request, Detroit filed its bankruptcy petition, and the automatic stay prevented the TRO hearing from going forward. In *Gradually Then Suddenly*, Judge Aquilina implied that she might have



By Nicole M. Smithson

issued a TRO: “This was so enormous. I just thought this was another attack on our constitution and I wasn’t going to stand for it.”

Detroit’s bankruptcy case was assigned to Steven W. Rhodes, a federal bankruptcy judge who is now retired. In addition to determining whether Detroit was eligible for bankruptcy, Judge Rhodes had to determine the critical issue of whether the retirees’ pension rights could be impaired.

Although the Michigan Constitution provides “that pension rights may not be impaired, it also says that pension rights are contract rights. In bankruptcy, we impair contract rights day in and day out.” Judge Rhodes explained.² “As easy as it was legally for me to come to this conclusion, I had a very strong emotional reaction after I left the courtroom to having told 20,000 pensioners and current employees that their pension rights might well be impaired through this process.”

about all of the different issues that could have been fought about, there would have been nothing left of Detroit but dust.”³

One of the major challenges facing Judge Rosen was how to protect the art collection belonging to the Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA), one of Detroit’s only positive-value assets, from creditors. Depending on who was evaluating, the collection’s estimated value was \$454 million to more than \$8.5 billion.

To preserve the collection and secure funding for the retirees, Judge Rosen proposed a “Grand Bargain” in which foundations, the DIA, and the State of Michigan would contribute millions of dollars that would be used to pay creditors like the retirees so that the DIA’s collection could go into a charitable trust. The “Grand Bargain” raised \$816 million.

Detroit exited bankruptcy in December 2014.

in the bankruptcy, it gave him the technical knowledge to understand its intricacies.

Gradually The Suddenly took 6.5 years to complete. In addition to collecting archival images and footage, Katz and his team conducted 137 on-camera interviews.

In thinking about the lessons to be learned from Detroit’s bankruptcy, Katz acknowledges that Detroit’s social and historical circumstances made its challenges unlike those of any other major city. But in many ways, Detroit is like the proverbial canary in the coal mine. It is an example of what can happen when elected officials make reelection their first order of business instead of making the hard choices needed to keep the community viable. Until the bankruptcy, the Detroit story was essentially a tale of “people kicking the can down the road,” says Katz. Every government must confront its problems before it is too late.

“If the lawyers and the creditors had taken years to fight about all of the different issues that could have been fought about, there would have been nothing left of Detroit but dust.” - Judge Gerald Rosen

Judge Rhodes enlisted Gerald E. Rosen, now retired but then the chief judge of the Eastern District of Michigan, to mediate a confirmable plan of adjustment. Judge Rosen understood the gravity of his assignment. “If the lawyers and the creditors had taken years to fight

The Film

Katz was the ideal person to tell the story of Detroit’s bankruptcy. Before becoming a filmmaker, Katz spent much of his career working in municipal finance. His background not only made him deeply interested

Katz graciously made his film available to the attendees of NAWJ’s 44th Annual Conference in Detroit. The film complemented *How Detroit Resolved the Bankruptcy Crisis*, a panel discussion featuring Judge Rosen and Melvin B. Hollowell, former corporation counsel for the City of Detroit.

For more information about *Gradually Then Suddenly* and Katz’s other films, please see <https://www.historymakingproductions.com>

¹ *Gradually Then Suddenly* won the 2021 Library of Congress Lavone/Ken Burns Prize for Film.

² *Gradually, Then Suddenly: The Bankruptcy of Detroit* (2022).

³ *Gradually, Then Suddenly: The Bankruptcy of Detroit* (2022).

COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT



How do you become a military judge? One way is to ask Linda Murnane that question at a luncheon. She will then review your resume, forward it to the Chief of the Army Trial Judiciary, and, voila, you're an Army judge! At least, that's how it happened for me. Fast forward a few years and I have the honor of chairing the Military and Veterans Committee with Judge Murnane.

So what is the Military and Veterans Committee? If you have ever scrolled through the vast list of NAWJ committees, you may have come across it. Or perhaps you saw the Military Judges Committee, or the Military and Veteran Judges Committee. We have had a few name changes and have experienced a metamorphosis. So let me introduce you.

The Military and Veterans Committee includes not only military judges but all members of NAWJ who are veterans. It also includes judges who serve on courts determining cases related to veterans, judges determining eligibility for veteran benefits, and, importantly, family members of military members and veterans and also those who have dedicated some part of their legal practice to representing military members and veterans before courts,

boards, and tribunals or other types of proceedings. If your life or your legal practice has involved the military, you belong on this committee.



Our committee currently includes veterans, former military judges, and legal practitioners whose client base includes service members. Our goal is to educate the judiciary on how involvement in the courts affects service members, veterans, and their families.

Did you know that the service member you fined for a traffic violation might have already had his pay reduced for the offense by his commander? Did you know that the service member you sentenced may have already received punishment for that same offense? Have you thought about the impact of family court rulings on military families?

If you would like to know more, please consider joining us.



By Kirsten Brunson
Colonel, U.S. Army, Ret.

2022 Committee Members

Co-Chair Linda Murnane
Co-Chair Kirsten Brunson

Patricia Harris
Yadhira Gonzalez-Taylor
Alex Manning
Jacquelyn McQuinton
Renee Stackhouse
Renee Worke

ALL RISE!



Here comes the

All rise because here comes the judge. Correction: Here comes the judges! 200 judges in fact! 200 women judges representing 20 countries were in attendance when the National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ) held its 44th annual conference in Detroit at the Book Cadillac Hotel.

NAWJ President Elizabeth White opened the conference, "All Rise: Standing Up for Global Justice in the City that Moved the World!"

Co-Chaired by Hon. Michelle Rick of the Michigan Court of Appeals and Zenell B. Brown from the Third Circuit Court, the conference was filled with education, entertainment, and sisterhood of networking. Every aspect of the Michigan legal community was represented in the planning and execution of the conference. Judge Denise Page Hood, the former Chief Judge of the U.S. Eastern District Court, and Hon. Megan Cavanagh and Hon. Justice Welch of the Michigan Supreme Court served on the planning team and were in attendance along with sister judges and lawyers from all over the state.

The speakers and programming were the heart of the conference, and the presenters did not disappoint. The roster included Barry Scheck, Co-Founder of the Innocent Project; former

mayor Hon. Dennis Archer; U. S. Attorney Dawn Isom; and many other international, national, and local attorneys and speakers.

The programming began on October 18th with the arrival of judges from 19 different countries such as Pakistan, Nigeria, and Lebanon. The judges were hosted by University of Detroit in the atrium by Judge Denise Langford Morris, Dean Jefferson Exum, and NAWJ District Chair Judge Mariam Perry. The international contingency visited the local district, circuit, and federal courthouses. Judges from the

Maldives led a panel and afternoon tea

allowed all the judges to become better acquainted. It was not surprising that the attendees, no matter where they lived or had come from, they found they had something in common with others.

Waawiyatanong, the land the colonist renamed Detroit, is the ancestral and contemporary homeland to three Anishinaabe nations of the Council of Three Fires: the Ojibwe, Ottawa, and Potawatomi. Therefore, it was center for Native American history in the conference as well. Hon. Allie Greenleaf Maldonado Chief Judge for the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians included her welcome in the program. The conference opened with a tribal land acknowledgment and



200 women judges representing 20 countries were in attendance when the National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ) held its 44th annual conference in Detroit at the Book Cadillac Hotel.

judges!

a tribal dance performance. A session on Thursday covered the history of Indian Boarding Schools, the Indian Children Welfare Act (ICWA), and Canada's path to reconciliation.

Throughout the conference, representatives from the courts, law schools, firms, and bar associations volunteered. Law students had an opportunity to attend an evening with the Judges in the Planting the Seed Program. Incoming NAWJ President,



Judge Toni Clarke oversaw the program that was sponsored by the Detroit Bar Association (DBA). The Barristers' President, Essence Patterson, encouraged the students from various law schools to join the DBA and share in the ongoing Barristers' activities.

One of the most heartfelt moments for the Michigan legal community was the awarding of the Lady Justice Award to the late Hon. Karen Fort Hood. "Our Sister, Judge Karen Fort Hood epitomized all that Lady Justice represented," Judge Langford Morris shared in her remarks. All of the members of the Black Judges Association surrounded and hugged Judge Fort Hood's sister on stage as she received the award.

The saying goes that there is nothing like a Detroit party. The NAWJ Party with A Purpose and Gala confirmed that is the truth. Attorney Syeda Davidson and a team of aerialists provided ambient entertainment. Judge Sara Smolenski proved that law school does not remove your funny bone. And, the Detroit Youth Choir energized and electrified the audience, stealing the heart of

everyone within hearing range.

Motown Museum, the DIA, the Charles Wright Museum, variety of local eateries, and local vendors offered attendees multiple opportunities to further partake in all the city of Detroit has to offer. Nothing this big and fantastic happens without team work and sponsors, and although space does not allow for them to be all listed by names in this article, their individual collective efforts moved the hearts of the judges

and delivered a conference focused on global justice.



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

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Membership News

District One welcomed 10 new members: Judge Mary Beth Ogulewicz (District Court), Judge Lee Peterson (Probate & Family Court), Judge Melissa Darigan (Rhode Island Superior Court), Judge Nan Sauer (Probate & Family Court), Judge Rachel Hershfang (Appeals Court), Judge Jennifer Melia (Probate & Family Court), Judge Christine Anthony (Probate & Family Court), Judge Linda Sable (Juvenile Court), Judge Joanna Rodriguez (Juvenile Court), Judge Susan Ricci, ret. (Probate & Family Court). We are excited to see our membership grow!

Member Spotlight

Juvenile Court First Justice Helen Brown Bryant

On Friday, November 18th, the Massachusetts Trial Court celebrated its

20th National Adoption Day, an annual event that raises awareness of the thousands of Massachusetts children in state foster care who are in need of adoptive families. The celebration commemorated 101 adoptions by 85 families in courthouses across the Commonwealth as part of National Adoption Day (NAD) and recognized other adoptions that were finalized in 2022.

The Juvenile Court ventures to make every adoption special and tries to accommodate any special request. This year one of the children being adopted was Deaf and used American Sign Language (ASL). A few days prior to NAD, the court was told that the request for an ASL interpreter for the child could not be filled, and the adoption would need to take place without the interpreter or be rescheduled for a different day. But First Justice Helen Brown Bryant stepped in to save the day! Judge Brown Bryant is

fluent in ASL, and thus she was able to fill the last minute request for an ASL interpreter. This meant that Judge Brown Bryant could conduct the adoption and converse directly with the young man, who was surprised to learn that “my judge can sign”. What an amazing gift Judge Brown Bryant gave to this young man and his family! Well done!

Judge Brown Bryant graduated from MacMurray College and received her juris doctorate from the Howard University School of Law. She was appointed to the Juvenile Court in 2014. Prior to her appointment, Judge Brown Bryant was in private practice specializing in juvenile and probate law. She previously served as a staff attorney for the Office of Bar Counsel, a supervising attorney for the Massachusetts Advocacy Center, as well as an attorney for the Disability Law Center in Boston.

Chief Justice Amy Nechtem (former NAWJ President) said the following about Judge Brown Bryant:

“Judge Brown Bryant’s compassion and grace is at the forefront of her outstanding leadership in one of the busiest counties in the Massachusetts Juvenile Court Department. Judge Brown Bryant’s unique skills, always understated with humility, are evidenced in this National Adoption Day celebration captured here. It’s an honor to serve with Helen!”

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 Mary Dacey White (ret.), the immediate past District One Director, has been appointed, by NAWJ President Toni Clark, to the NAWJ Diversity and Inclusion



Judge Brown Bryant is signing “wonderful” in response to the child saying he wants to be a police officer when he grows up.

Committee for 2023.

Judge Nan Sauer is a panelist for a “Family Law in Review” continuing education program at the Social Law Library. Here is a link to the program: *Family Law Trilogy 2023 - Family Law Year in Review* (socialaw.com)

Judge Marylou Muirhead has retired after serving as a Housing Court judge for sixteen years. Judge Muirhead and Judge Amy Blake are planning at MentorJet program at New England Law Boston.

Judge Vickie Henry was interviewed on “Discovering the Law with Lucy Rivera.” Judge Henry demystified the appellate process in Massachusetts and discussed important appellate court procedures.

Judge Arose Nielsen was elected Vice President of the Justice Harry J. Elam Judicial Conference (formerly the Massachusetts Black Judges Conference). Judge Nielsen also presided over a mock trial for the Discovering Justice Program with Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter School Students. **Judge Cathleen Campbell** help to coach a

children’s running club, Road to the Right Track. The club runs two to three miles each Saturday at 9:00 AM in the Allston/Brighton area and they participate in several 5K road races during the year. Any judges who would like to run or partner with a child for a future 5K can should reach out to Cathi at cathleen.campbell@jud.state.ma.us.



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**

NAWJ Annual Conference



NAWJ-NY members Kathy King, Deborah James, Carmen Velasquez and Leslie Stroth (District 2 Director) at Detroit Annual Conference

The Foundation for The Judicial Friends, Inc. Gala

The Foundation for the Judicial Friends, Inc. held its 41st annual gala on November 29, 2022.



Pictured from left to right: Hon. Lumarie Maldonado-Cruz-Treasurer; Hon. Verna Saunders-President, and, Hon. Cheryl Gonzales- First VP.

Hispanic Heritage Month

“Entre Nosotras: An intimate Roundtable with The Latina Judges of the Appellate Courts”

On October 6, 2022, NAWJ-NY and the Judicial Section of the New York State Bar Association (NYSBA), celebrated Hispanic

Heritage Month by co-sponsoring this well-attended virtual event. The program was coordinated by NAWJ-NY Vice Presidents **Hon. Joanne D. Quiñones** and **Hon. Linét M. Rosado**, featured the Latina judges of the Appellate Courts, and was moderated by **Hon. Jenny Rivera**, Associate Judge, Court of Appeals. Panelists included: **Hon. Sallie Manzanet-Daniels** and **Hon. Lizbeth González**, Associate Justices, Appellate Division, 1st Dept, and **Hon. Betsy Barros** and **Hon. Helen Voutsinas**, Associate Justices, Appellate Division, 2nd Dept.

ELEVATIONS – Congratulations!

Supreme Court Justice Janice A. Taylor appointed to the Appellate Division, Second Department

Supreme Court Justice E. Jeanette Ogden appointed to the Appellate Division, Fourth Department.



NAWJ-NY and the Judicial Section of the New York State Bar Association (NYSBA), celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with a well-attended virtual event.



Judge Taylor, Bench Photo 2022, Appellate Div., 2nd Dept.



Judge Ogden on Appellate Division, 4th Dept. Bench

Hon. Tamiko Amaker, Appointed as Acting Chief Administrative Judge!

Elections, Awards and Other Notable News:

Congratulations to the Following Judges!

Elections First Department:

New York County: Hon. Lisa Sokoloff, Hon. Dakota Ransour, Hon. Sabrina Krauss, elected to the Supreme Court, Civil Term; Hon. Hilary Gingold, elected as Surrogate;

Hon. Carmen Pacheco, elected to the Civil Court.

Bronx County: Hon. Connie Morales and Hon. Myrna Socorro, elected to the Supreme Court: Hon. Sophia Hershman, the Hon. Cynthia Isaacs, the Hon. Michele Davila, the Hon. Taisha Chambers, and the Hon. Yadhira Gonzalez-Taylor, elected to the Civil Court.

Elections Second Department:

Kings County: Hon. Cenceria Edwards; Hon. Patria Frias-Colón; Hon. Cheryl J. Gonzales; Hon. Lorna McAllister; Hon. Dweynie E. Paul; Hon. Susan Quirk; Hon. Robin Sheares; Hon. Ellen Spodek (re-elected); and Hon. Anne Swern. All elected to the Supreme Court; Hon. Robin Garson (re-elected); Hon. Sherveal Mimes; and Hon. Pamela Patton-Fynes.

Congratulations to **Hon. Dweynie E. Paul** on her appointment as Supervising Judge of Kings County Civil Court.

Fourth Department:

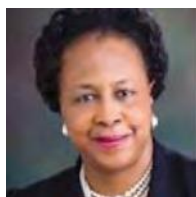
Hon. Betty Calvo-Torres, appointed as Supervising Judge of Genesee and Wyoming Counties Town & Village Courts; Hon. JaHarr S. Pridgen, appointed as Supervising Judge of the City Courts for the Eighth Judicial District.

AWARDS (Congratulations to all!)

Hon. Ellen M. Spodek, presented with the Joanne Minsky Cohen Award at the holiday celebration of the Brooklyn Women's Bar Association on December 13, 2022.

Hon. Dineen Riviezzo and Hon. Michele Rodney, the newest appointees to the Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics.

Hon. Erika M. Edwards, Hon. Sallie Manzanet-Daniels and Hon. Lillian Wan, who will each be presented with the Advancement of Judicial Diversity Award at the NYSBA Judicial Section's Annual Luncheon on January 20, 2023.



DISTRICT THREE (DE, NJ, PA, VI)

Delaware, New Jersey,
Pennsylvania, Virgin Islands

DISTRICT DIRECTOR:

Hon. Sandra Ann Robinson
State of New Jersey

DELAWARE
NEW JERSEY
PENNSYLVANIA
VIRGIN ISLANDS

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DELAWARE:

CONGRATULATIONS! Justice Tamika

Montgomery-Reeves, formerly of the Delaware Supreme Court, has won confirmation by the United States Senate for a seat on the 3rd Circuit United States Court of Appeals.

NEW JERSEY:

WELCOME: The Honorable Lisa James-Beavers, Director and Chief Judge of the New Jersey Office of Administrative Law joined the membership as she encourages her entire staff of more than one hundred legal minds to also join NAWJ.

NEW JERSEY:

COLOR OF JUSTICE (COJ) 2022:

The COJ 2022 program was held in the Essex County Historic Courthouse, located on the triangle at Newark's West Market Street, Springfield Avenue and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. The Courthouse was originally opened in 1907 and after years of neglect and disrepair, the building underwent a \$50 million restoration and renovation and was re-dedicated on December 29, 2004.

The 2022 COJ committee was chaired by

two dynamic judges, one from Essex County - **Hon. Siobhan Teare**, JSC and one from Hudson County - **Hon. Santiago Lourdes**, JSC/Ret. New Jersey is delighted for the opportunity to introduce to the world the state's first Black woman to serve on the New Jersey Supreme Court - **Honorable Associate Justice Fabiana Pierre-Louis**. Associate Justice Pierre-Louis and **Associate Justice Helen E. Hoens**, Ret., spoke on the COJ panel with other leaders in various legal fields, i.e. County Sheriff, Police Officers, Prosecutors, Public Defenders, Paralegals, Law Clerks and more.

In attendance were students from colleges and schools in Bergen, Essex and Hudson County. Also, members of the New Jersey judiciary were in attendance for the program and for the opportunity to learn more about NAWJ and membership. The successful COJ 2022 program concluded with a reception.

District III Primary Goal for 2023:

Delaware, Pennsylvania, Virgin Islands, New Jersey will broaden and

straighten recruiting efforts! States in District III will develop a delegation to attend the IAWJ Conference May 9-14, in Marrakesh, Morocco.



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
VIRGINIA

4

Happy New Year! As we begin 2023, I have been receiving more requests for in person events. I am happy to report that the Irma S. Raker Dinner at the Maryland Governor's House is being planned for early March 2023.

Welcome to our newest members: Linda

Arret of Maryland, **Tannisha D. Bell** of the United States Department of Health and Human Services Departmental Appeals Board, **Carol Corderre** of the Prince George's County Circuit Court, **Isabella Demougeot** of JD Katz in Bethesda, Maryland, **Kay Harding** of the Baltimore City District Court, and

Gladys Weatherspoon of the Prince George's County Circuit Court. We hope to meet you soon.

Thanks to those of you who attended Coffee, Cocktails & Conversation with President Toni Clarke on December 1. It was a great meeting with many recently appointed judges.

Detroit Annual Conference

Some first-time Annual Conference attendees in Detroit, were District 4 members.

Vivian Henderson of the Virginia Beach General Court and **Jacinta Alves** of an Administrative Law judge at U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Departmental Appeals Board joined us.



Below are other photos from the NAWJ Annual Conference from October 19-22, 2022, in Detroit, Michigan.



Congratulations to **Beverly Cutler** who received the Vaino Spencer Award for very



Coffee, Cocktails & Conversation with President Toni Clarke

inspiring pro bono work helping members of the U.S. Military and veterans with naturalization and related immigration issues as well as her assistance to women judges who were evacuated from Afghanistan and are facing challenges reestablishing their lives in our country.

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** of the U.S. Court of International Trade, **Bibi Berry** of the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, Maryland, **Tanya Chutkan**, of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, and **Deborah Israel** of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia spoke about their paths to the bench. **Bridget Bailey** Lipscomb, WBA



Immediate Past President, moderated.

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.

Congratulations to **Angela M. Eaves** who received the Women's Bar Association's 2022 Rita C. Davidson Award on December 13, 2022.

NAWJ is presenting a virtual play entitled "Full Truth" by **Paul Handy** on February 15, 2023, at 6:00 p.m in honor of Black History Month. The play begins when Thurgood Marshall, special counsel for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, is playing poker with his colleagues when he learns that the United States Supreme Court has agreed to hear the five cases consolidated into *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*. Please save the date! If you interested in joining as a member of the cast, please contact [me](#).

Stayed tuned for other District 4 events. Details for the NAWJ Mid-Year Meeting in Annapolis from April 20, 2023, to April 22, 2023, are to be announced. See [here](#) for more information. Virginia Members, please be on the lookout for an interest survey from the Virginia Chapter.



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

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

ARKANSAS
OKLAHOMA
TEXAS

11



Paving the Way to the Courthouse

The end of 2022 meant of several Judges retiring including several NAWJ Members. **Judge Linda Chew**, 327th District Court in El Paso retired after 21 years on the Bench. **Judge Brenda Kennedy**, 403rd District Court in Travis County is hung her robe. Her portrait was hung on December 15, 2022. Lastly, **Judge Lora Livingston**, a lifetime member of NAWJ has retired from the 261st District Court in Travis County after 25 years on the bench. She was honored at the hanging of her portrait on December 2nd in a standing room only coinciding with the ribbon cutting of the new Courthouse which she was instrumental bringing to fruition.

Color of Justice

On October 1st, District 11 lead by our member **Lesley Briones** hosted Color of Justice in Houston Texas. All three Houston Law School were involved: University of Houston Law School, Thurgood Marshall School of Law and South Texas School of Law with over 70 law students participated. We were able to give out six \$1,000 Scholarships. We would like to thank our sponsors Arnold & Itkin, LLP, Vinson & Elkins LLP, McFarland PLLC, **Hon. LaShawn A Williams** and **Johnny E. Webb III**, **Andrews Myers** and **Justice Julie Countiss**.

After a successful partnership with Texas Latinx Judges in El Paso on its first high school outreach program, **Paving the Way to the**



Houston Color of Justice

Courthouse, we are looking forward to our second event in Laredo Texas on November 18.

We also co-sponsored with Texas Latinx Judges on their Journey to the Bench in Dallas Texas at Latino Culture Center on October 20th. Our NAWJ member, **Justice Robbie Partida Kipness** from the 5th Court of Appeals had over 14 Judges speak to over 30 students.

Judge Maria Salas Mendoza continued her work as our District Director of NAWJ in El Paso by doing the Faces of Justice at Bowie High School on October 26th. Several of our NAWJ

Faces of Justice Program



members were speakers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Chief Justice Dori Contreras, 13th Court of Appeals, spoke at New Frontiers in Marital Property sponsored by the Family Section of the State Bar of Texas in Lake Tahoe, Nevada.

Justice Gina Benavides, 13th Court of Appeals attending the International Historians de Mexico in Austin on behalf of the Texas Supreme Court Historical Society on October 30th to Nov. 3rd at the University of Texas at Austin.

Thurgood Marshall School of Law at their Alumni Ball recognized **Judge Rabeea Collier** the District Civil Judge of the 113th Harris County.

Justice Dennise Garcia was awarded the Louise Reggio Award by the Dallas Women Lawyers Association Also Justice Erin Nowell received outstanding jurist.



DISTRICT FOURTEEN (CA, NV)
California, Nevada

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

CALIFORNIA
NEVADA

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District 14 NAWJ members are true leaders in their communities. All year we posted about the many awards, appointments, and panel participation of our amazing sisters of the law and the bench. It is our sincere hope that you read our monthly newsletter updates to learn about the many activities of District 14 members and to meet the new members who are introduced each month. This short article will inform you about the outstanding California Court leadership by NAWJ members and will feature a short piece on the long-standing book club with the San Diego NAWJ community and the local women's jail.



Chief Justice Sakauye

The entire California judiciary has been enhanced by the leadership at the top in our recent past Supreme Court **Chief Justice Tani Cantil Sakauye**.

Her engaging, intelligent, practical, and compassionate approach to improving the justice system and the public's access to it made us all proud to be a part of it. It was our own Chief Cantil Sakauye who confronted the United States Attorney General back in 2017 when many federal immigration officials were staking out the courthouse steps to arrest undocumented individuals. It was these same individuals who took time out of their days and away from work to serve as witnesses in many cases in our courts. The presence of the federal officials was affecting their ability to participate and give important testimony in serious cases. Chief Cantil Sakauye recognized this negative impact and eloquently penned a letter to the Department of Justice. Our Chief inspired us by her very actions, and her affect will be with us for years to come. At the beginning of this year, California was fortunate to get another NAWJ member and



Latest CA Supreme Court Justice Guerrero

by her actions and will no doubt continue to improve the California Justice system.

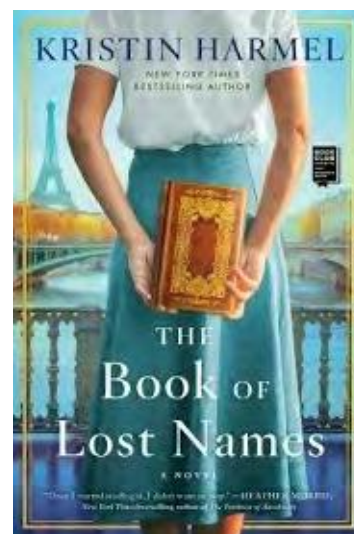
women as the next Chief Justice. **Chief Guerrero** recently took her oath to lead our courts with her usual grace and humility. Chief Guerrero is another person who leads

SAN DIEGO NAWJ MEMBERS CONTINUE WITH THE NAWJ "FREEDOM THROUGH WORDS" BOOK CLUB

In September of 2015, San Diego NAWJ members and judicial officers **Pennie McLaughlin** and **Terrie Roberts** stepped into a classroom at the women's detention facility to discuss a book. During the long walk out to the room, each wondered what to expect and if the women would seem eager to discuss the selected book sent a month earlier to the twelve of them. Within the first twenty minutes, both Judge Roberts and McLaughlin turned to each other with a knowing smile, silently exchanging the thought, "this is going to work!" In the second row of the room sat the youngest women of the group, and she shyly raised her hand. We thought she was about to share a comment on the story, but instead told us how this book club bridged the broken divide of her relationship with her mother. She explained how her mother bought the book too, and every couple of days, they would talk eagerly on the phone about the latest chapters and soon that gave way to something resembling a path back to each other. She told us how she never had anything to say to her mother for years, knowing the disappointment she caused her mother by being incarcerated. This book, a simple story of love, redemption and getting over and

through hardship, did the trick.

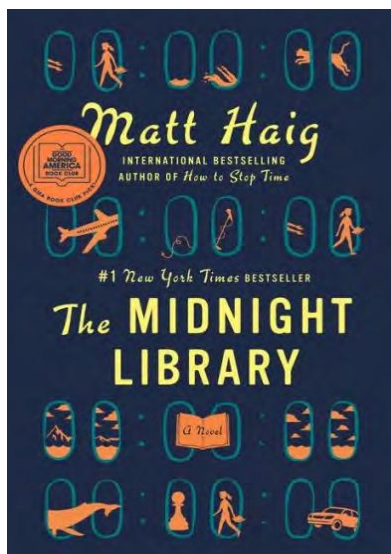
The pandemic halted our monthly gatherings, and with it, brought great disappointment in the many NAWJ members who gladly give up several hours on the third Thursday of the month to host when their turn arrives. The waiting list to host is several names long, as the judges and attorneys who participate long ago learned that we get as much out of it as the women who await our arrival to break up their usual nightly routine. These women are avid readers, and many are educated, whether formally or from street smarts.



In July of this year, we were back, and several months and book discussions have now passed. Recently, **Judge Jose Castillo**, participating for his first time, remarked, "The best part of tonight's experience were comments made by one of the participants. She shared that she wasn't a big reader but found the book engaging and ended up reading (and enjoying) the whole book (*The Book of Lost Names*). She also shared that she had teenage kids and planned to start a book club with them, because she believed it would be a great way to encourage them to read - an experience she did not have growing up. Those

comments made the whole evening worth it.”

Two other NAWJ longtime members engaged the incarcerated women in a discussion of “*The Midnight Library*.” 9th Circuit Court of Appeal Judge Margaret McKeown and San Diego Superior Court Judge Joan Weber, former California Judges Association President, teamed up for this December group. Judge Weber shared “We read *The Midnight Library* which is the book about a young woman who feels her life is going nowhere and so she attempts suicide and ends up in a purgatory which contains books of all the regretful decisions she made in



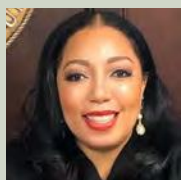
her life. She can relive those lives and stay in them or reject them again. What a fascinating discussion the book generated. In the end she realizes that no life is perfect and that you just need to cherish the ups and downs of living that are inevitable in every life. Many of the women felt that they were in a “purgatory”, and we explored what decisions they may want to make when they are released to regain their self-respect and confidence in themselves when back in society.

I’ve been thinking about the discussion ever since we left. The whole evening was inspirational.”

DISTRICT FIVE (FL,GA,NC,SC)

Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina

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DISTRICT DIRECTOR:

Hon. Phinia Aten

Magistrate Court of Rockdale County

DISTRICT NINE (IA, MO, WI)

Iowa, Missouri, Wisconsin

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District Nine (IA, MO, WI)

Hon. Karen Romano

Iowa District Court

DISTRICT SIX (AL, LA, MS, TN)

Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee

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DISTRICT DIRECTOR:

Hon. Jennifer Smith

Division IV, Criminal Court, 20th Judicial District, Nashville, Tennessee

DISTRICT TEN (KS, MN, NE, ND, SD)

Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota

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DISTRICT DIRECTOR:

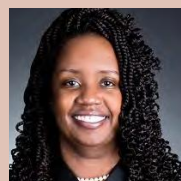
Hon. Rachel Pickering

Shawnee County District Court, Topeka, Kansas

DISTRICT SEVEN (MI, OH, WV)

Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia

7



DISTRICT DIRECTOR:

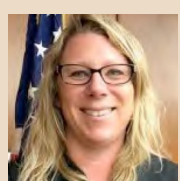
Hon. Miriam Perry

15th District Court, Michigan

DISTRICT TWELVE (AZ, CO, NM, UT, WY)

Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming

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DISTRICT DIRECTOR:

Hon. Colleen Clark

Arapahoe County Court, Colorado

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Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky

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DISTRICT DIRECTORS:

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Hon. Julie Verheyne

St. Joseph Superior Court, Indiana

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Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana Oregon, Washington

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Hon. Bride Seifert

Homer Superior Court, Alaska

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District Ten (KS, MN, NE, ND, SD)

Hon. Rachel Pickering

Shawnee County District Court, Topeka, Kansas

District Eleven (AR, OK, TX)

Hon. Gina Benavides

13th Court of Appeals, Texas

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Francie Teer, CFRE
Director of Development

Thank you for your investment and commitment to NAWJ. Many of you choose to support the organization beyond membership dues. Thank you for all that you are doing for NAWJ. Thank you for serving on committees, taking part in projects, publishing articles and planning conferences.

If you would like to explore various ways to support NAWJ along with your membership, consider:

- A monthly gift
- Including NAWJ in your estate plans by joining the NAWJ Legacy Society
- An annual gift to the Judith C. Chirlin Memorial Fund.

I would be happy to discuss any of those options with you. I hope you will get in touch with me at fteer@nawj.org or by phone (757) 880-8343.

With gratitude,
Francie

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NAWJ NEW MEMBERS SINCE JULY 1, 2022

We welcome the following new members of NAWJ:

Hon. Loren L. AliKhan, D.C. Court Of Appeals, Washington, DC

Hon. Jacinta Alves, US Dept. Of HHS, Washington, DC

Hon. Christine Del Monte Anthony, MA Probate and Family Court, Westborough, MA

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Ms. Linda L. Arret, Consultant, Chevy Chase, MD

Ms. Alison Y. Ashe-Card, Wake Forest University School Of Law, Winston-Salem, NC

Hon. Wendy Avila, Kern County Superior Court, Bakersfield, CA

Hon. LaQunya L. Baker, 18th Judicial District, Littleton, CO

Hon. Helena Barch-Kuchta, U.S. District Court E.D. California, Yosemite National Park, CA

Hon. Tannisha D. Bell, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC

Hon. Supti Bhattacharya, Superior Court Of New Jersey, Trenton, NJ

Hon. Demetria Brue, 36th District Court, Detroit, MI

Hon. Betty Calvo-Torres, Court of Claims, Buffalo, NY

Hon. Cynthia Chappell, State Of Tennessee Trial Courts, Nashville, TN

Hon. Manjari Chawla, State Bar Court, San Francisco, CA

Hon. Angela D. Coble, Kansas Court Of Appeals, Topeka, KS

Hon. Carol A. Coderre, Circuit Court for Prince George's County, Upper Marlboro, MD

Hon. Chantel E. Contiguglia, Arapahoe County, 18th Judicial District, Centennial, CO

Hon. Gail M. Cookson, Office of Administrative Law, Newark, NJ

Hon. Melissa E. Darigan, RI Superior Court, Providence, RI

Hon. Mary A. DeBoer, Porter Circuit Court, Valparaiso, IN

Hon. Margaret Degla, Henrico Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court, Henrico, VA

Ms. Isabella C. Demougeot, JDKatz, P.C., Potomac, MD

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Hon. Maria E. Evangelista, San Francisco Superior Court, San Francisco, CA

Hon. Kathleen G. Galen, 38th District Court, Eastpointe, MI

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Hon. Rene C. Gilbertson, Los Angeles Superior Court, Torrance, CA

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Hon. Kay N. Harding, District Court of Maryland for Baltimore City, Baltimore, MD

Dr. Aprill Harmon, UHLC, Pearland, TX

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Professor Jamila Jefferson-Jones, University Of Kansas School Of Law, Lawrence, KS

Mrs. Mariam Kaloustian, United States Attorney's Office, Los Angeles, CA

Hon. Christina Klineman, Marion Superior Court, Indianapolis, IN

Ms. Tamar Kraft-Stolar, Women & Justice Project, Brooklyn, NY

Mrs. Patricia Limón de Rodríguez, South Texas College of Law, Houston, TX

Hon. Adelaida Lopez, San Diego Superior Court, San Diego, CA

Hon. Betty Lugo, New York City Civil Court, New York, NY

Ms. Joy Lyngar, The National Judicial College, Reno, NV

Hon. Sallie Manzanet-Daniels, Appellate Division First Dept., New York, NY

Hon. Jacquelyn A. McClinton, 36th District Court, Detroit, MI

Hon. Kristen McVey, Tippecanoe Superior Court 5, Lafayette, IN

Hon. Jennifer Melia, Massachusetts Trial Court, Worcester, MA

Hon. Marissa Mitchell, Henrico Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court, Henrico, VA

Hon. Suzanne Mitchell, W.D. OKLA, Oklahoma City, OK

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Hon. Mary Beth Ogulewicz, District Court Of Commonwealth Of Massachusetts, Easthampton, MA

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Hon. Cathy Ostiller, Los Angeles County Superior Court, Monterey Park, CA

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Hon. Phong Wang, State Bar Court, San Francisco, CA

Hon. Gladys M. Weatherspoon, Prince George's County Circuit Court, Springdale, MD

Hon. Bridgett N. Whitmore, 193rd District Court of Dallas County, Dallas, TX

Hon. Kimberley Wiegand, 41-A District Court, Sterling Heights, MI

Hon. Melinda J. Young, King County Superior Court, Seattle, WA

SAVE THIS DATE!

Indianapolis
October 5-7, 2023

