

# GENERATIONS

Annual Report to Stakeholders 2022



## A VIRTUOUS CYCLE

What college or university depends on having its own students come back and teach the next generation of students? There aren't many. The NJC is one.

Read the recollections of more than 500 NJC alumni in the newly published book "In My Words, 2022: The Oral History Project" and a clear pattern emerges: Judge after judge giving thanks for the wisdom imparted to them by more-experienced judges who taught their class or led their discussion group or just sat next to them.

The NJC is not only the crossroads of the judiciary, where judges of all types and from all over the country and the world come together to learn and exchange ideas. It's also where the

torch is always being passed. More-experienced judges teaching less-experienced judges—almost always as unpaid volunteers. They come back to pay back the knowledge they received from *their* volunteer instructors, who themselves felt compelled to return the favor.

It's hard to imagine anything more noble or poignant. Or more important, considering that nothing less than public confidence in the courts and the rule of law is at stake.

Generational transmission does not mean being stuck on replay. Every year the College develops new courses to address new issues and imperatives: climate change, racial injustice, artificial intelligence. In 2019,

the NJC launched a first-of-its kind course for attorneys who aspire to become judges.

In this year's report, you'll read about families who have sent multiple generations of judges to the NJC to learn and teach. And about how

generations of NJC faculty have inspired judges to implement innovations like treatment courts back in their home jurisdictions.

It's a virtuous cycle. Thank you for helping to keep it going.



Hon. Benes Z. Aldana (Ret.)  
President & CEO



Alan R. Brayton, Esq.  
Board of Trustees Chair



### Teaching climate science to judges

The College and the nonprofit and nonpartisan Environmental Law Institute collaborated on a yearlong program to teach judges about climate science and climate litigation.

*Judicial Leaders in Climate Science* was created to build the capacity of state judiciaries to respond to the rise in litigation related to climate change. It incorporated elements of the NJC's longstanding *Leadership for Judges* course, which helps judges develop their ideas to improve their courts.

The 23 judges who participated represented 21 states and Puerto Rico (two judges). They were nominated by their chief justices and ranged from trial court judges to state supreme court justices.

One of the highlights of the program was a visit to Cape Cod for a program held in conjunction with the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and the Woodwell Climate Research Center.



### A national gathering on defending judicial independence

Former Alabama U.S. Senator and United States Attorney Doug Jones delivered the keynote at Democracy's Last Line of Defense, a national symposium in Chicago that the College helped organize.

The event, held May 26 at The Old Post Office, a Chicago landmark, looked at why and how to preserve an independent, impartial judiciary and the consequences for democracy if that independence is lost.

Speaking at a reception the night before the symposium, former Republican National Committee Chair and Montana



*Clockwise from top left: President Aldana with Harvard Law Professor Scott Westfahl, participating remotely; Former Montana Governor Marc Racicot; event program; NYU Law Professor Melissa Murray, participating remotely; Illinois Supreme Court Chief Justice Anne M. Burke; Former Newsweek Legal Affairs Editor David A. Kaplan*



Governor Marc Racicot described “unmistakable warnings signs all around us that our constitutional government, our republic, is at risk.”

Other prominent speakers included Chief Justices Tani Cantil-Sakauye of California and Anne M. Burke of Illinois; Ukraine Supreme Court Justice Ganna Vronska (who appeared in a recording); ABA President Reginald Turner; UC Berkeley School of Law Dean Erwin Chemerinsky; U.S. District Court Judge Reggie Walton; NYU Professor of Law Melissa Murray; Mother Jones Magazine Bureau Chief and MSNBC on-air analyst David Corn; and former Newsweek Legal Affairs Editor David A. Kaplan.

Several news organizations reported on the event, including Bloomberg Law, Reuters, Law360, Law.com, the ABA Journal and The Washington Post.

The symposium was organized by the NJC along with the Berkeley Judicial Institute of the University of California, Berkeley School of Law, the International Academy of Trial Lawyers, the Berkeley Law Civil Justice Research Initiative and Robins Kaplan LLP.

The Chicago program was the first in a planned series of symposia that will focus on threats to judicial independence and democracy.

The event was sponsored by the Law School Admission Council, American College of Trial Lawyers, the Flaschner Judicial Institute, Allstate, Roman Silberfeld, JAMS, Munger Tolles & Olson LLP, Quarles & Brady LLP, Susman Godfrey, Edward Blumberg, Esq. of Deutsch Blumberg & Caballero, P.A., Edwards Law Firm, Keller Rohrback LLP and Signature Resolution.

## GENERATIONS

“Ever since I was 5 years old, I wanted to be a lawyer and a judge. At the age of 50 I was appointed a judge and able to move to Wyoming. Very few of us have a dream at the age of 5 that comes true when we’re 50.... My father had attended the NJC in the 1950s or 1960s and thought it was the greatest thing.... I wore my father’s robe that he was sworn in with in the 1950s. He wore it until he retired from the Wyoming Supreme Court.”

— Hon. Nancy J. Guthrie (Ret.), former district court judge, Teton County, Wyoming. She completed six NJC courses, starting with *General Jurisdiction* in 1995.



Top row, from left:  
Supreme Court of  
Guam Associate  
Justice Robert J.  
Torres, Jr.; California  
Chief Justice Tani  
Cantil-Sakauye

Middle row, from left:  
Symposium Planning  
Committee Chair  
Roman Silberfeld;  
Former U.S. Court  
of Appeals Judge  
Thomas B. Griffith;  
Board of Trustees  
Chair-Elect Edward  
R. Blumberg; U.S.  
District Court Judge  
Reggie Walton.



Bottom row, from left: Mother Jones  
magazine Washington Bureau Chief  
David Corn; keynote speaker, former  
Alabama Senator Doug Jones with NJC  
Trustees (from left) Hon. Margarita Bernal  
(Ret.), Hon. Leslie Hayashi (Ret.), Darcee  
Siegel, Esq., and Hon. Mary-Margaret  
Anderson (Ret.)



### Successful debut for *The Anti-Racist Courtroom: Theory and Practice*

“This is the most phenomenal course or conference I’ve ever been to in my entire judicial career,” wrote one of the 60 participants in the debut offering of *The Anti-Racist Courtroom: Theory & Practice*.

The four-day course, held in Memphis, Tennessee, taught not only how to identify sources of systemic bias within the judiciary but concrete, actionable steps to combat it. The curriculum included history, experiential learning, cognitive science, and psychological and sociological research.

Among other activities, participants visited the National Civil Rights Museum, located at the Lorraine Motel (site of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s assassination in 1968), and were able to examine artifacts and archival material about the American civil rights movement not available to the public.

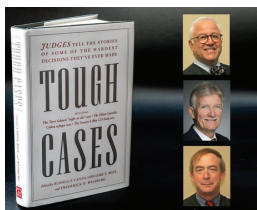
The 60-person enrollment was the most in recent memory for the debut of a course.

Faculty included attorney and racial justice activist Jeffery Robinson, writer and star of the award-winning documentary “Who We Are: A Chronicle of Racism in America.” Another was Professor Robert Livingston of the Harvard Kennedy School, author of “The Conversation: How Seeking and Speaking the Truth About Racism Can Radically Transform Individuals and Organizations.”

The 2023 course is scheduled to be held in Montgomery, Alabama, and will include Equal Justice Initiative founder and Executive Director Bryan Stevenson.



### Learning lessons from tough cases



Presented in New Orleans, *Lessons from Tough Cases* was inspired by a 2018 book, “Tough Cases,” in which judges describe their most difficult case.

Senior Judge Reggie Walton of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia discussed the Scooter Libby trial. Retired Florida Circuit Court Judge George Greer talked about the Terry Schiavo case, and Florida Circuit Court Judge Jennifer Bailey described the tumult surrounding the Elian Gonzalez case. Two of the book’s editors, Hon. Russell Canan (Ret.) and Hon. Gregory Mize (Ret.), helped develop and taught at the course.

### Judicial Academy places 10 more graduates on the bench

Ten more graduates of the NJC’s *Judicial Academy* for attorneys who aspire to become judges made it to the bench in 2022, bringing the total to 17 by year’s end and 20 by mid-2023. See photos of all 20 on the back cover of this report.

Here’s the list of those appointed or elected in 2022:

- Hon. Tsering Cornell was appointed a judge of the Clark County (Washington) Superior Court.
- Hon. Christine Gonong was elected a commissioner of the Los Angeles County Court.
- Hon. Travis Flieman was elected a Common Pleas Court judge in Darke County, Ohio.
- Hon. Jaime Hawk (pictured with President Aldana at her investiture) was appointed a judge of the King County (Washington) Superior Court.
- Hon. Robert Lara, Jr. was elected a District Court judge in Las Cruces, New Mexico.



- Hon. Josh Patrick was appointed an administrative law judge with the Colorado Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.
- Hon. Jeffrey Phillips was appointed an associate judge for the Nez Perce Tribe in Nez Perce County, Idaho.
- Hon. Chris Sease was elected a District Court judge for Rowan County, North Carolina.
- Hon. Catherine Taylor won election to the Los Alamos (New Mexico) County Magistrate Court.
- Hon. Sherry Thompson-Taylor was appointed a judge of the San Diego (California) County Superior Court.

The class has been held three times since 2019 with the fourth scheduled for Oct. 16-20, 2023.

### Reading & Robes™ expands nationally

The College’s civics-education outreach to young people, Reading & Robes™, has now reached more than 6,100 children in 17 states.

The College’s signature civics education program was begun in 2018 by Director of Advancement Susan Robinson, a former executive director of Northern Nevada Literacy, and Chief Financial Officer Patrick Grimes. It involves judges, wearing their robes, reading aloud to younger students from culturally diverse books



with themes of justice, fairness and the law. The first books chosen for the program were autobiographical works by Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, who autographed each book given out.

The programs take place in courthouses, schools, youth centers and, occasionally, at the NJC.

### Presenting the AJEI Summit in Scottsdale

Approximately 300 appellate judges and practitioners attended the 2022 Appellate Judges Education Institute Summit in Scottsdale, Arizona. The Summit is an annual event, and this was the second the College has coordinated since AJEI voted to transfer its affiliation from Duke Law School to the NJC in 2020.

Highlights included a keynote address by an NJC alumna, Hon. J. Michelle Childs of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, a panel on safety and security featuring U.S. District Judge Esther Salas, whose son was shot and killed during an attack at her home in New Jersey, and the always-popular Supreme Court review presented by Erwin Chemerinsky, dean and Jesse Choper Distinguished Professor of Law at U.C. Berkeley.

Three members of the NJC staff served as panelists or moderators: President Aldana (Public Confidence and the Courts: Pillars of the Rule of Law), National Tribal Judicial Center Director Jan Morris (The Reign of Three Sovereigns: Jurisdictional Puzzles in Indian Country) and Distinguished Fellow Keith Fisher (Bias, Discrimination, and Harassment: Rules for Lawyers and Judges).



United States District Judge Esther Salas and Mark Lanterman, former member of the U.S. Secret Service Electronic Crimes Taskforce, on the panel *Safe and Secure? Are You Sure?*

“My father-in-law was a circuit judge and he attended an extended session with the NJC in the late '60s, early '70s and bragged about it for the rest of his career. When I had the opportunity to attend as a municipal judge from Tennessee, I jumped at it. I was thrilled to have the opportunity to work with other judges of my state, as well as municipal judges around the country, to learn from them and take back with me the pride of being affiliated with The National Judicial College.”

— Judge Paul B. Plant, Saint Joseph (TN) Municipal Court

## Dividing the Waters makes a deep dive into the Colorado River crisis

The College's water law program, *Dividing the Waters*, marked the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Colorado River Compact with a conference in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where the landmark interstate water-sharing agreement was signed in 1923.

The title of the conference was *The Colorado River: Is the Law of the River Relevant to the Emerging Crisis?* The compact has come to be called the Law of the River in the seven Southwestern states of the Upper and Lower Colorado River Basin that are part of the compact. In 2022, drought conditions reduced river flow and reservoir levels in the region to historic lows.

Immediately after the conference, several western states chief justices in attendance convened a colloquium. They committed to further education for judges handling what are expected to be increasingly common and contentious water rights cases.



Touring an adjustable dam on the Rio Grande

## The College's plan for the next five years approved

Promoting the independence and impartiality of the judiciary is literally Priority 1 in the College's new five-year strategic plan approved by the Board of Trustees.

Titled “Stepping Forward,” the plan commits the College to doing its part to preserve two fundamental elements of our democracy that are under attack: the rule of law and the ability of the judiciary to make independent, impartial decisions.

In pressing for the priority, Board of Trustees Chair-Elect Edward Blumberg, a trial lawyer in Miami, said that if the independence of the judiciary and the rule of law go away, nothing else will really matter.

The six strategic priorities spelled out in the plan for 2023-2027 are:

1. Promote the Independence and Impartiality of the Judiciary
2. Maintain Leadership in Academic Excellence
3. Achieve Long-Term Financial Sustainability and Institutional Resilience
4. Raise the Public Profile of the NJC and Continue to Build its Brand
5. Develop and Sustain a High-Performing Team of Professionals and Volunteer Leadership for Operational Effectiveness
6. Strengthen Our Strategic Alliances and Partnerships

The plan was the product of nearly a year of collaboration among NJC staff and representatives of the College's other stakeholders: the Board of Trustees, its standing



committees and Strategic Planning Committee, the Board of Visitors, the Faculty Council, the Tribal Advisory Board, the Joint Committee of Law Firm Partners and Corporate Counsel, and the Alumni Relations Committee.

The full plan can be read at: [judges.org/about/strategic-plan/](https://judges.org/about/strategic-plan/)

## \$1 million grant from Walmart to address racial disparities in youth incarceration

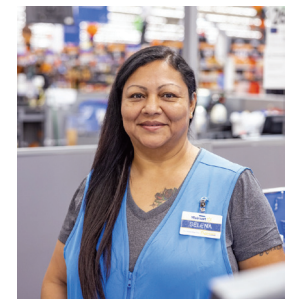
The College has begun working with judges to reduce racial disparities in youth incarceration rates under a two-year, \$1 million grant awarded by the Walmart Foundation through the Walmart.org Center for Racial Equity.

Black youth are disproportionately represented in the criminal justice system, and studies have established a correlation between juvenile incarceration and long-term difficulties in future employment, education and housing opportunities. That contributes to the likelihood of recidivism.

Under the grant, the NJC will collaborate with the National Bar Association, the nation's oldest and largest national network of predominantly African-American attorneys and judges.

The NJC will launch a program for educating the judiciary and articulating best practices, not only for alternative sentencing of youth offenders but also for promoting mentoring to help judges eradicate the cycle of crime and incarceration.

The Walmart.org Center for Racial Equity aims to strengthen community-based crime-prevention initiatives.





### Sandra Day O'Connor Award goes to trailblazer Judge Bernice Donald

A woman of many firsts, Judge Bernice B. Donald of the United States Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit, became the first judge competitively selected to receive the NJC's highest honor, the Sandra Day O'Connor Award. The inaugural O'Connor Award in 2021 went to Justice O'Connor herself.

The formal presentation to Judge Donald took place at the Heard Museum of American Indian Art in Phoenix the week of the annual Summit of the Appellate Judges Education Institute, an NJC affiliate. Justice O'Connor's son Scott was among those who spoke at the awards program.

Judge Donald, 70, had recently announced she was moving to senior or part-time status. She became the first African-American woman to serve on the 6th Circuit following Senate confirmation of her nomination by President Obama in 2011.

Among her other firsts:

In 1995 she became the first African-American woman to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Tennessee.

In 1988, she became the first African-American woman ever to serve as a U.S. bankruptcy judge.

She was elected to the General Sessions Criminal Court in Tennessee in 1982, becoming that state's first-ever African-American woman judge.

### President Aldana offers President Biden advice on a Supreme Court nominee

Law360 published an op-ed by President Aldana suggesting five characteristics President Biden should consider in selecting a Supreme Court nominee to replace the retiring Justice Stephen Breyer. Biden had already narrowed his choices by promising to nominate a Black woman for the seat.

President Aldana wrote that he hoped the nominee would have experience as a state trial judge (the last such justice was Sandra Day O'Connor), be a product of a public law school (there are none on the current court), be a lifelong learner, show concern for the public good, and be a model of civility and collegiality. President Biden ultimately nominated and the Senate confirmed Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson.

A subsidiary of LexisNexis, Law360 is a subscription-based legal news service that claims 2 million daily readers of its newsletters.



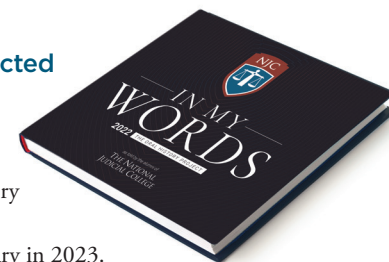
President Aldana with Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson and (rear) Judge J. Michelle Childs at Judge Childs' investiture on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit

### Alumni memories collected into a book

Hundreds of NJC alumni shared stories of their time at the College for an oral history project undertaken in advance of the College's 60th anniversary in 2023.

The College contracted with Publishing Concepts Inc. to contact alumni and ask them to verify or update their contact information and share stories of what their NJC experience meant to them. The resulting book, "In My Words, 2022: The Oral History Project," was offered for sale to alumni. The printed version runs more than 250 pages and contains more than 550 stories.

The many heartfelt testimonials included this one from Judge Linda Melendez of Coral Gables, Florida, who said of her experiences: "They made me not only a better judge but a better person in general."



### 2022 Judicial Heroes & Legends included the first ALJ honoree

For the first time, the College's continuing series of profiles of Judicial Heroes & Legends recognized an administrative law judge: retired Social Security Administration Judge Marilyn Zahm.

In 2016 Judge Zahm made history when she became the first woman elected president of the Association of Administrative Law Judges, the union for more than a thousand ALJs at the Social Security Administration. Judge Zahm is credited with helping preserve judicial independence and access to justice during her time leading the union and throughout her legal career.

Another Hero & Legend profiled in 2022 was the late Constance Baker Motley, who in 1966 became the country's

## GENERATIONS

“My grandfather was a judge, a lawyer, and a prosecutor. My father became a judge, so I am a third-generation judge.... When I won my election in 1992, I wanted to get the best experience I could. There was nobody better than The National Judicial College to teach us how to do our job as a judge.”

— Judge Frank D. Celebrezze III, Court of Appeals of Ohio



Judge Rya Zobel

first female African-American federal judge. Before going on the bench, she worked closely with Thurgood Marshall and Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Also recognized was 90-year-old U.S. District Court Judge Rya Zobel, who immigrated to the United States from Germany after being orphaned, along with her younger brother, in the chaos following the end of the Second World War. Judge Zobel became the first woman nominated to the federal bench in Massachusetts and in 2020 became the first female U.S. District Court judge to receive the highest honor bestowed on a federal judge, the Devitt Award.

Judicial Heroes & Legends profiles appear on the NJC website, Judges.org.

### Personnel news

**Dr. Mishkat Al Moumin** joined the College as director of academics, replacing **Katheryn Yetter**, who was academic director and later associate provost for academic affairs for 10 years.

Dr. Al Moumin came to the College from the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center in Monterey, California, where she served as curriculum developer and faculty



Mishkat Al Moumin

member. She practiced family law in Iraq and was an associate professor at Baghdad University School of Law prior to serving as the first Minister of the Environment in the interim Iraqi government of 2004-2005.

**Konstantina “Tina” Vagenas** joined the College as director of strategic initiatives. She previously served as chief counsel and director of Access to Justice Initiatives at the National Center for State Courts.

**Beth Loureiro** became the new registrar after longtime registrar **Muriel Bartlett** retired. Originally from Brazil, Loureiro was director of the Huntington Learning Center in Reno and had held several positions related to student advising, recruiting and registration at the University of Nevada, Reno.

The College continued to build its research department with the additions of **Dr. Antony Leberatto**, senior research fellow; **Dr. Christine McDermott**, postdoctoral researcher; **Dr. Dimitrious Kyriakou**, postdoctoral researcher; and **Anna Fine**, graduate student and graduate researcher.

Provost **Joy Lyngar**, who recently completed her 15th year with the College, is the new president of the National Association of State Judicial Educators.

### New trustees, visitors and honors

Attorney **Susan H. Briggs**, a partner in Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote, P.C., of Charlotte, North Carolina, and **Kellye Y. Testy** president and chief executive officer of the Law School Admission Council, based in Newtown, Pennsylvania, were elected to the College’s national governing body, the Board of Trustees.

The College also welcomed three new members of the Board of Visitors: **Joseph J. Ortego**, partner, diversity partner and chair of NP Trial at Nixon Peabody LLP; **Ricky A. Raven**, senior vice president-deputy general



Susan H. Briggs



Kellye Y. Testy



Joseph J. Ortego



Ricky A. Raven



Ann Silver

counsel at Allstate Insurance; and **Ann Silver**, CEO of the Reno + Sparks Chamber of Commerce.

The Visitors are nationally recognized individuals who serve as goodwill ambassadors enhancing awareness of the College and assisting with fundraising efforts.

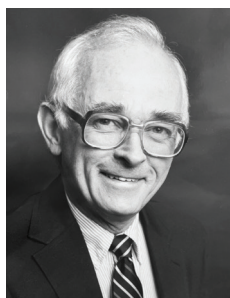
**Hon. Toni Clarke (Ret.)** became president of the National Association of Women Judges.

The Chicago Bar Association presented Trustee **Sandra Yamate**, CEO of the Institute for Inclusion in the Legal Profession, with the Justice John Paul Stevens Award, the highest award of the legal community in Chicago.

### In memoriam

The third dean of the College, **Hon. Laurance M. Hyde, Jr.**, passed away in Reno at the age of 94. During his nine-year tenure, which started in 1965, he established the NJC on the campus of the University of Nevada, Reno, where it remains to this day.

*Continues on p. 8*



Hon. Laurance M. Hyde, Jr.



Hon. V. Lee Sinclair

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE REPOSITORY

Distinguished Faculty and former Faculty Council Chair **Hon. V. Lee Sinclair** passed away at age 70. He served as a judge in his hometown of Canton, Ohio, for 17 years. He was a pioneer and known nationally for his work in raising awareness about judicial security. National media, including CNN, NBC, CBS, The New York Times and The Los Angeles Times, sought out his expertise, and he provided expert witness testimony in court security matters.

### Recognizing three faculty with tenures exceeding 40 years, and the 2022 Payant Award winner

A group dinner for 57 judges taking *Administrative Law: Fair Hearing* in Reno provided an appropriate setting for a salute to the College's longest-tenured faculty: Dr. Gordon Zimmerman, who retired in 2019 after 46 years; Professor Elizabeth Francis (45 years); and Justice W. Michael Gillette (42 years).

They all started teaching in *Administrative Law: Fair Hearing* in 1980. They received the V. Robert Payant Award for Teaching Excellence in consecutive years starting in 2006 with Justice Gillette and ending in 2008 with Dr. Zimmerman.

The 2022 Payant Award was presented at the same dinner to Professor Kelly Tait, who has taught communication at the NJC in more than 200 courses.



President Aldana with Professor Francis

### California Supreme Court justice delivers RBG Lecture

California Supreme Court Associate Justice Goodwin Liu delivered the second Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg Lecture. He clerked for Justice Ginsburg during the Supreme Court's October 2000 term. Justice Liu reflected on Justice Ginsburg's life, legacy and lessons. The RBG Lecture is held each year on the anniversary of her birth, March 15.



### Justice Jackson Lecturers

Minnesota District Court Judge Peter Cahill, who handled the 2021 jury trial that found former police officer Derek Chauvin guilty of murder during the arrest of George Floyd, delivered the fall 2022 Justice Jackson Lecture. Judge Cahill shared advice for handling a high-profile case or any trial. More than once he said the advice was directed at himself.

In the spring lecture, NJC President Emeritus William Dressel described what it takes to go from lawyer to "Your Honor." He said the process involves more than just being appointed or elected to the bench.



Judge Peter Cahill



President Emeritus William Dressel

"It requires you continuously improving your skills, your ability, your knowledge, and I hope for a lot of you, when presented with the opportunity, that you will contribute to the advancement and improvement of the administration of justice."

Bill Dressel served as NJC president for 14 years, the longest tenure in the College's history. The Jackson Lectures are sponsored by Thomson Reuters.

### Alumni news

U.S. District Court Judge **J. Michelle Childs** of the District of South Carolina was confirmed to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, commonly regarded as the country's second-highest court. The White

## GENERATIONS

“My father attended the NJC years ago. I knew that I was going to become the administrative judge, so he suggested I go to Reno and take a class.... This will be my fifth year as the administrative judge, and most administrative judges don't last that long. I like to think it was because I went to class at the NJC, gained all of that experience, and forged those friendships.”

— **Judge Leslie Ann Celebrezze**, Domestic Relations Court, Cleveland, Ohio. She was elected to succeed her father, the late James P. Celebrezze, also an NJC alumnus. She is a cousin of Frank D. Celebrezze III, p. 7

House acknowledged that she was among several judges considered to fill the seat on the Supreme Court of the United States vacated by the retirement of Justice Stephen Breyer. The nomination ultimately went to Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson.

South Carolina Circuit Court Judge **DeAndrea Benjamin** was nominated and later confirmed, in early 2023, to a seat on the United States Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit. She became the second woman of color to serve on the circuit. Judge Benjamin is the wife of former NJC Trustee **Steven Benjamin**, who in early 2023 resigned from the board after he became senior advisor and director of the White House's Office of Public Engagement.

Alameda County (California) Superior Court Judge **Trina Thompson** was confirmed to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California.

The American Bar Association Commission on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity honored Washington Supreme Court Justice **G. Helen Whitener** with its Stonewall Award. Named after the New York City Stonewall Inn police raid and riot of 1969, a turning point in the gay rights movement, the award recognizes lawyers who have considerably advanced lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals in the legal profession and successfully championed LGBT legal causes. Justice Whitener was the first Black LGBT judge in the state of Washington. President Aldana chairs the Commission on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.

### Thousands worldwide learned about AI and the rule of law through the NJC

The College collaborated with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and several other large organizations to present a Massive Open



Online Course or MOOC on artificial intelligence and its impact on the rule of law.

The course was made available in seven languages on the College's online learning management system and was open to registered participants over a six-week period. A total of 4,432 people registered for the course from more than 140 countries, the vast majority outside of Europe or North America.

The other partners in the project were The Future Society, the Brazilian Network Information Center, the Regional Center for Studies on the Development of the Information Society, and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Standard Association.

### Hosting the American Indian Justice Conference

The National Tribal Judicial Center hosted the 2022 virtual American Indian Justice Conference, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance.

The two-day program brought together 735 tribal court judges and staff, corrections and supervision personnel, and social and behavioral health services providers from tribes across the country. They received essential information on topics such as court planning and development, diversionary court programs, traditional dispute resolution, justice system responses to alcohol and substance abuse, and emerging issues relevant to tribal justice system development.



### Outreach to imperiled judges in war-torn Ukraine

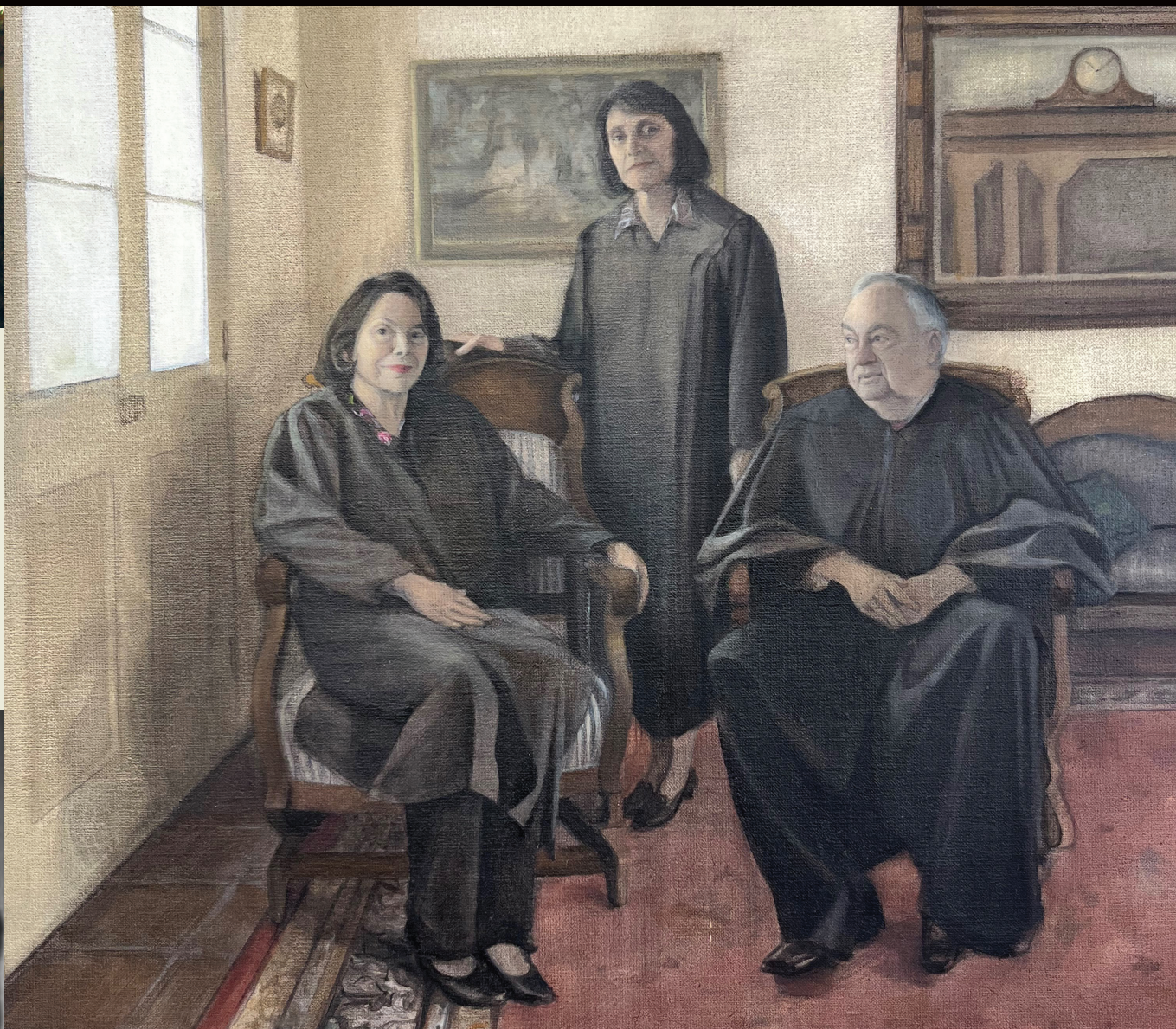
During a webinar on how to establish small claims courts and justice of the peace courts in Ukraine, 34 judges were forced to relocate; they were being bombed by Russian forces. No one was hurt and the judges were able to continue the course from a basement.

Among several remotely delivered, war-related courses for Ukraine judges, the College worked with the Ukraine New Justice Program and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to present *Handling Cases of War-Related Sexual Violence*.





The Lemmons of Louisiana include former Louisiana Supreme Court Justice Harry T. Lemmon (below, center), wife Mary Ann Vial Lemmon (above, right and below, left) of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana and their daughter, District Court Judge Lauren Lemmon (above, left)



# The Lemmon tree of judges has grown sturdy and high

All states have a “lemon law” that protects consumers who purchase cars or other goods that are always breaking and can’t seem to be fixed.

Louisiana has the Lemmons – two M’s – of law, who might be to the legal profession in Louisiana what the Barrymores or the Fondas are to acting or the Mannings to quarterbacking: exemplary professionals.

Harry T. Lemmon, 92, served on the Louisiana Supreme Court from 1980 to 2001.

In 1996, his wife, Mary Ann Vial Lemmon, was confirmed to a seat on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana. At 81, she’s still on that bench, now in senior status.

In 2008, Lauren Lemmon, one of their six children – four of whom have had legal careers – was elected a district court judge in St. Charles Parish, taking the seat held from 1981 to 1996 by ... her mother.

Judge Lauren Lemmon, who plans to retire in January 2024 after 15 years on the bench, says of her parents’ legal accomplishments while raising

six children: “I used to look at them and say, ‘How did they do all of this?’”

When Harry Lemmon went to Reno to study *General Jurisdiction* at the NJC in 1971, the entire clan came along. Lauren was 7 years old. The youngest of the children turned 3 during the course.

“The Sparks Y would send a bus over and pick up the kids to go to day camp,” Judge Vial Lemmon says.

Judge Vial Lemmon says she never returned to take GenJur herself – too many family and court responsibilities, she says. But she managed to absorb valuable knowledge anyway.

“It was a good introduction to me. I kind of listened in to some of the sessions ... and it was an eye-opener for (both of) us because it was a new perspective.”

She had a different kind of eye-opener a decade later when she took the bench in St. Charles Parish and St. John the Baptist Parish: She was assigned five consecutive death penalty cases.

One of those five – all of which were jury trials – would be immortalized in the book and later critically acclaimed movie “Dead Man Walking,” about Sister Helen Prejean’s experiences serving as a spiritual adviser to death-row inmates and their victims. Judge Vial Lemmon says the account of one of the trials she presided over got one important fact wrong.

The nun was highly critical of the local bishop for sending a representative from the archdiocese to testify in court that the Catholic Church took no position in opposition to the death penalty. The implication was that this may have eased the

“The greatest thing I learned from my parents – as judges and as people – is humility.”

—Judge Lauren Lemmon

conscience of jurors in heavily Catholic Louisiana, leading to the imposition of a death sentence.

“But the jury that sentenced him to death did not hear that testimony (from the archdiocese) because I excluded it,” she says.

All three Lemmons have enjoyed distinguished judicial careers. Justice Harry Lemmon co-founded the Louisiana Judicial College.

Among her many other honors, in 2022 Judge Vial Lemmon received the *Integritas Vitae* (“life of integrity”) Award from her and her husband’s and her children’s law school alma mater, Loyola University of New Orleans. Previous winners include Mother Theresa.

Judge Lauren Lemmon, an 11-time alumna of the College, is now an NJC faculty member. She debuted by teaching a section of *General Jurisdiction* on mindfulness for judges in spring 2023.

She says her parents have been wonderful exemplars of what the College teaches every judge to be.

“The greatest thing I learned from my parents – as judges, and as people – is humility, that there’s something greater than myself.... It’s so wonderful to have been raised with such integrity and humility.”

*A more-detailed version of this feature can be found at [judges.org/60th\\_anniversary/alumni-profiles/](https://judges.org/60th_anniversary/alumni-profiles/)*

“It’s a gift for us to be able to see people we know go into recovery, get better and have lives.”

—Judge Steven Leifman



# Most offenders in prison have serious mental health issues; he's showing generations of judges a way to break the cycle

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In January 2000, Judge Steven Leifman was trying to hear the case of a man accused of a minor offense. It was not going well.

The defendant, long ago a student at Harvard, was covering his ears. He shook back and forth, screaming. He claimed that the couple in the courtroom, his parents, had been sent by the CIA to kill him. His real parents, he insisted, had died in the Holocaust.

He was having a psychotic episode. And not his first. The defendant had a religious fixation, believing he needed to be closer to God. In Israel, he had been caught running naked through the

Orthodox Jewish sections of Jerusalem. Israel deported him back to the United States.

Now his behavior was Judge Leifman's problem.

The NJC alumnus, faculty member and associate administrative judge of the Miami-Dade County Court ordered psychological evaluations. Diagnosis: late-onset (among people 40 to 60 years old) schizophrenia. That made him incompetent to stand trial. But under the system then in place, the judge had no ability to order any psychiatric treatment.

"I had to release him back to the street, psychotic and eminently dangerous to himself and others," the judge recalls. "None of us become judges or lawyers or professionals to be part of that kind of problem."

The frustration led him to partner with others in south Florida to create the 11th Judicial Circuit Criminal Mental Health Project for Miami-Dade County. The program diverts non-violent misdemeanor and felony defendants with mental illnesses away from the criminal justice system and into appropriate mental health facilities. It also provides training to police on how to identify people in a mental health crisis and deescalate confrontations.

The project has become a model for justice systems around the country with several other NJC alumni joining in the effort. Judge Kathryn Zenoff of the Illinois Appellate Court is co-chair of the National Judges and Psychiatrists Leadership Initiative for Criminal Justice and Mental Health. Other alumni advocates include Judge

Robert Wonnell of the Johnson County, Kansas, District Court and Circuit Court Judge Nan Waller in Portland, Oregon.

Inspired by Judge Leifman's approach, Denver Probate Court Presiding Judge Elizabeth Leith launched a special competency docket in 2022 to help address Colorado's huge backlog of such cases that had led to the state being fined.

"What I'm doing is trying to get the same thing going in Denver that he's (Judge Leifman) done," she says.

A lot of people in the criminal justice system are. And it's not hard to see why.

Since the project's launch in 2000, the number of arrests in Miami-Dade County has fallen from 118,000 a year to 53,000, Judge Leifman says. The jail population has dropped from 7,400 to 4,400, and the county was able to close one of its three main jails.

Judge Leifman says an estimated 92 percent of women in jails and prisons have serious mental health issues due to histories of trauma—mostly from sexual abuse as young girls. For men the figure is 75 percent.

Cases like Justin Volpe encourage him that the Mental Health Project is on the right track. Volpe, a peer specialist for the project, is himself a graduate of the program. In the early 2000s, he was experiencing panic attacks, anxiety attacks, paranoia, and hallucinations. He's now been in recovery for 11 years and sober for six.

"It's a gift for us to be able to see people we know go into recovery, get better and have lives," Judge Leifman says. "It's been an amazing journey."

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# SCHOOL FOR JUDGES

In 1990, 60 Minutes followed a new judge from a small town in Oregon to The National Judicial College



*After Harry Reasoner opens the segment, we see Judge Pratt being sworn in back in Vale, Oregon. Road biking has become one of Judge Pratt's hobbies in his partial retirement.*

# A generation ago, he was the NJC's star student on TV

John Burdette Pratt remembers being wary. It was spring 1990 and he had just been appointed to fill a newly created judgeship in his hometown of Vale, Oregon. It's a small town in the extreme eastern part of the state, about 12 miles from the border with Idaho.

He was in his law office wrapping up some work in advance of his move to the bench when the phone rang.

The caller said he was with the CBS news magazine 60 Minutes. The show was preparing to do a story on how lawyers learn to be judges. They said they wanted to follow him to The National Judicial College, where he was scheduled to take *General Jurisdiction*.

"I was pretty cautious," he recalls more than 30 years later. "I thought it might be a scam or something."

It wasn't. 60 Minutes went on to produce an entire segment about the College and how it prepares new and recently appointed judges for the bench. You can view the recording of the piece

on the NJC's YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/@thenationaljudicialcollege3888>.

It starts with host Harry Reasoner introducing Pratt, who was 39 at the time. He retired from full-time service on the bench in 2013 but continues to serve part time.

Reasoner asks viewers to imagine this: You are a lawyer in a small or medium-size American city and you're good enough to have just been appointed to the bench. You're sworn in. Now what?

"If you're like Judge Pratt, you go to Reno. Yes, Reno. That's where you can go to school and get a crash course in how to be a judge. Less than a

here. It looks like Iowa but feels like Death Valley.' It was about 110 that day."

The piece was supposed to air a few weeks later but was postponed because the Gulf War started in August of that year and that took up a lot of the media's attention. The NJC feature wasn't shown until March 31, 1991.

Judge Pratt says he didn't receive as much reaction in Vale as he did from the other judges around Oregon. "For a while I was introduced as 'the 60 Minutes judge.'"

Over the next 20 years he would take four more NJC courses, "all excellent experiences," he says.

"For a while I was introduced as 'the 60 Minutes judge.'"

—Judge John Burdette Pratt

mile from the bright lights of the casinos sits The National Judicial College."

Judge Pratt remembers it was a big deal in Vale having Reasoner and the film crew at the swearing-in. "Everybody had their best clothes on." The chief justice of the Oregon Supreme Court came.

The new judge got a chance to talk with the famous TV journalist during a lull in the filming.

"He was a really interesting man to talk to. It was very humorous. It was the first day of July and he'd flown into Boise (about 75 miles from Vale). He said, 'This is really interesting country you have

He says judicial education is especially important in small rural courts like his because a judge may have no one else to talk with about difficult issues. He remembers GenJur as "a real blessing and a benefit."

"I not only got a lot of instruction but an opportunity to collaborate with the other judges, some of whom had quite a bit of experience and could share their insights and experience."

*A more-detailed version of this feature can be found at [judges.org/60th\\_anniversary/alumni-profiles/](https://judges.org/60th_anniversary/alumni-profiles/)*

“It really is a testament to the fact that my dad and my uncle really stressed education in our family.... They really believed that if you can get an education, the sky is the limit.”

—Judge Eboni Johnson Rose

*From left, Baton Rouge District Court Judge Ronald Johnson, his daughter Judge Eboni Johnson Rose, and his twin brother, Chief Judge Donald Johnson*



# Family reunions happen daily for the judges Johnson

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**T**here are plenty of families with multiple generations of judges; you can read about others elsewhere in this report.

But you won't find many with multiple generations serving at the same time in the same district and in the same courthouse.

You will if you visit the 19th Judicial District Courthouse in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

On the eighth floor you'll find the office and courtroom of Chief Judge Donald R. Johnson. In October of 2023, he will complete his 30th year on the bench.

Across the hall is his identical twin brother, Judge Ronald R. Johnson, who began his fourth year on the bench in 2023 after 36 years in private practice.

On the ninth floor, directly above Judge Donald Johnson's office, is Judge Eboni Johnson Rose, Ronald's daughter and Donald's niece. She was elected to the district court in December 2020.

"I don't think it's ever happened before," Judge

Donald Johnson says of three family members, including a set of twins, serving together in the same court.

The Johnson Judicial Dynasty didn't come about by accident. There were two key precursors.

One was a lawsuit more than 30 years ago alleging violation of the Voting Rights Act in judicial elections in Louisiana. A consent decree led to a redistricting that created Black-majority voting districts. The redistricting, combined with more recent demographic changes, led to the election of more African-American judges. Black judges serving on the 19th Judicial District Court now account for 9 of the 15 seats.

The other precursor was a Johnson family tradition of educational achievement, at least of late.

The twins' father, an Army vet, worked for the Baton Rouge Water Company, repairing meters and supervising a section of Black employees. Their mother worked mainly as a maid. She later served as a court bailiff. Their family consisted of 11 children: seven boys, four girls. Ronald and Donald were in the middle.

Though neither of the parents went to college, they stressed the value of education.

Judge Donald Johnson now has seven degrees, including both the master's and doctorate in judicial studies offered by the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) in cooperation with the NJC. Since 2004, he has completed 60 courses with the NJC as well as teaching in a handful.

Judge Ronald Johnson completed six NJC courses in his first three years on the bench. As of 2023 his daughter had completed four courses

and was working toward her master's in judicial studies from UNR.

"You don't see this every day," she says of three members of the same family serving together as judges. "It really is a testament to the fact that my dad and my uncle really stressed education in our family.... They really believed that if you can get an education, the sky is the limit."

All three judges also give thanks to the NJC.

Judge Donald Johnson says, "When I came there, I realized that for me it was the best judicial education I could get."

If not for his NJC experience, he says, he would have been narrowly focused on Louisiana law and the state's traditional ways of operating courts. Instead, he learned what other courts around the country were trying. He took that knowledge back to Baton Rouge and became a change agent.

He helped introduce a pretrial drug-treatment court and a court focused on curbing domestic abuse, and he supported a program to help with the re-entry of prisoners' back into society. His brother Ronald was preparing to launch a veteran's treatment court in fall 2023.

The Johnsons are helping carry out the NJC mission of making the world a more just place — together.

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*A more-detailed version of this feature can be found at [judges.org/60th\\_anniversary/alumni-profiles/](https://judges.org/60th_anniversary/alumni-profiles/)*

A family from a small town in western Iowa has produced the state's longest-tenured supreme court justice ever, the local chief judge, and the state's current chief justice — all of them NJC alumni



*From left, District Court Chief Judge Jeffrey Larson, Supreme Court Chief Justice Susan (Larson) Christensen and their father, the late Justice Jerry Larson*



# Dad and brother went first; now she's the boss

Iowa Supreme Court Chief Justice Susan (Larson) Christensen is following in some giant footsteps — her father's — and even outdoing him in one respect. But her achievements of becoming the court's third woman justice and second woman chief are bittersweet in one respect.

Her father, Jerry L. Larson — like her, an NJC alumnus — was the longest-serving justice in the history of the Iowa Supreme Court: 29 years, 8 months, 17 days. He would have easily eclipsed the 30-year mark, his daughter says, if not for Iowa having a mandatory retirement age for judges of 72.

"I think he would have stayed till the day he died," she says.

Therein lies the bittersweet part. Suzy (as she prefers to be called) Larson Christensen took her seat on the Iowa Supreme Court on August 1, 2018, a little more than three months after her father died at age 81.

"He didn't know that I was appointed to the Supreme Court or that I had even applied because when he died, there was no vacancy. I wish he could have known."

Justice Jerry Larson did live long enough to see both Suzy and his son Jeff appointed to the state court bench (another son, David, is a lawyer and another daughter, Becky, is a teacher). Both Suzy and Jeff served in the same district in southwest Iowa that includes the family's longtime hometown of Harlan, Iowa. It's a hamlet of 5,000 people about an hour and 40 minutes west of the capital, Des Moines.

Jerry Larson was the longest-serving justice in Iowa Supreme Court history. Now his daughter is chief justice and his son is a chief judge

Their grandfather and uncle were also longtime lawyers in Harlan, and when Jeff and Suzy graduated from law school, they both joined the family practice.

Judge Jeff Larson, who is two years older than Chief Justice Christensen, was appointed a judge in Harlan in 2003 and is now the chief judge. Chief Justice Christensen began her judicial career as an associate judge in the district in 2007.

When their dad — who, unlike his daughter, never served as chief justice — attended *General Jurisdiction* at the NJC in 1975, the two future judges among his children were both teenagers and understandably not interested in going off to judge school with their father. But when Jeff Larson was appointed to the bench nearly 30 years later, he says, his dad told him it would be worthwhile to attend, so he did.

"The Judicial College is a good experience for any young judge," he says. "It gives you a lot of insight and help in figuring out how to be a judge, not so much the substantive law but how to conduct a trial and how to conduct yourself as a judge."

His sister is equally enthusiastic about her NJC experiences. Like most NJC alumni, she came away with not just courtroom skills but friends and mentors for life among the course participants. She's especially close to the judges who came with her from other parts of Iowa.

In one respect, her trip to Reno foreshadowed her current judicial position.

As often happens with GenJur course participants who attend as a group, at the end of a day of classes, they ran into the problem of deciding where to go for dinner in Reno. The future chief justice dreaded the daily debate and came up with a solution: Responsibility for choosing the restaurant would rotate among the four Iowa judges. The judge with the most seniority (not her) would go first.

"You are going to pick where we eat tonight," she instructed her slightly more experienced colleague, "and don't even ask if we want to go there."

Her friends from the course have since told her that she was predestined to become chief justice, considering how well she bossed them around in Reno.

*A more-detailed version of this feature can be found at [judges.org/60th\\_anniversary/alumni-profiles/](https://judges.org/60th_anniversary/alumni-profiles/)*



“Listening to his stories, I began thinking, ‘I haven’t done enough.’”

—Judge Trina Thompson



*New U.S. District Court Judge Trina Thompson and Senior U.S. District Judge Myron Thompson, whom she met at an NJC course.*

# A pioneering judge inspired her to take the first steps on her own unlikely journey

In 2022, when Judge Trina Thompson was waiting for the Senate to vote on her lifetime appointment as a federal district court judge, she was asked what had given her the idea to pursue the position. Because as candidates for the federal bench go, she was hardly a shoo-in.

At her eventual investiture as a judge of the United States District Court for the Northern District of California in January 2023, a friend, Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Huey Cotton, listed some of the obstacles:

She didn't work at a big law firm that could promote her nomination.

She had never worked as a United States attorney or federal public defender.

She didn't know California's senators personally.

He didn't mention that she was also 61 years old, an advanced age to be starting a lifetime appointment on the federal bench.

Surprisingly, she was inspired to go for the job by attending the NJC's *When Justice Fails* course and meeting Senior Judge Myron Thompson of the United States District Court for the Middle District of Alabama. (Since taking that NJC course, her first, she has completed six more and joined the faculty.) She was thereafter urged to consider the job by a lifelong college friend. Several colleagues from the African American Association of California Judicial Officers also encouraged her to seek the appointment.

*When Justice Fails* examines those times in history, such as during the Holocaust, when courts became complicit in injustices. The course is held in different places. In 2019, when Judge Thompson attended, the site was Montgomery, Alabama, one of the birthplaces of the civil rights movement. Montgomery is where Rosa Parks was arrested in the 1950s for flouting a racist city ordinance that said Black people had to give up their seats on city buses if a White person was present.

The Rosa Parks case and many other landmark civil rights cases were decided by legendary U.S. District Court Judge Frank Minis Johnson. Myron Thompson, after serving as the first Black assistant attorney general in Alabama's history in the early 1970s, entered private practice and became adept at arguing cases in front of Johnson. In 1980 he was appointed as Johnson's successor on the U.S. District Court bench.

Trina Thompson arrived in Montgomery for *When Justice Fails* as a former criminal defense attorney, law clerk and deputy public defender who, in 2002, had become the first African-

American woman ever elected to Alameda County (CA) Superior Court. In 2019 she was still on that bench in Oakland.

She says Judge Myron Thompson (no relation) told her about the desegregation efforts he'd been a part of, and during her visit she learned that he was stricken with polio at age 2. "You could just feel the empathy in him," she recalled.

Listening to his stories, she said, she began thinking, "I haven't done enough."

Even though she had already done plenty.

That included becoming an expert on criminal street gangs, teaching about justice as an adjunct professor at her baccalaureate and law school alma mater, UC Berkeley, and being named to the national Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention by President Obama in 2011.

At her investiture, Judge Thompson thanked many people in attendance by name, including President Aldana, who accompanied her to Montgomery and introduced her to Myron Thompson.

"If it wasn't for *each of you*," she said, "I wouldn't be up here."

She said she had already told her clerks at the court, "We're here, we're created to do good work. The judges, the clerks, the research attorneys, the courtroom deputies, the court reporters, the marshals, the attorneys ... we are all the guardians of due process, inclusion and equity. Our work empowers and inspires. It liberates. It transforms. It restores our community."

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## College receives \$400,000 *cy pres* award

In 2022 a judge in a bank fraud lawsuit awarded the College \$400,000 in *cy pres* or unclaimed settlement funds to use for judicial education. Board of Visitors member Roman Silberfeld, the national trial chair for Robins Kaplan LLP in Los Angeles, made the case for the College.

The term *cy pres* comes from French law and means roughly "as near as possible." When funds from a settlement or judgment go unclaimed or are otherwise unallocated, a court may award the money to a nonprofit organization that can put it to use in a way that is as near as possible to the intended purpose of the settlement or judgment.

The NJC represents a natural beneficiary of *cy pres* awards, being a nonprofit and nonpartisan organization dedicated to expanding access to justice, ensuring procedural fairness, and improving judicial decision-making.

The College is actively pursuing other *cy pres* awards through its many contacts in the legal world.

## GENERATIONS

“The NJC allows us to forge ahead on the cutting edge of all that we do. They are always on point with things that are impacting the independence of the judiciary.... As I move toward retirement from the bench and into Alternative Dispute Resolution practice, I will always support the NJC. Thank you, NJC!”

— Circuit Court Judge Denise Langford-Morris, Pontiac, Michigan

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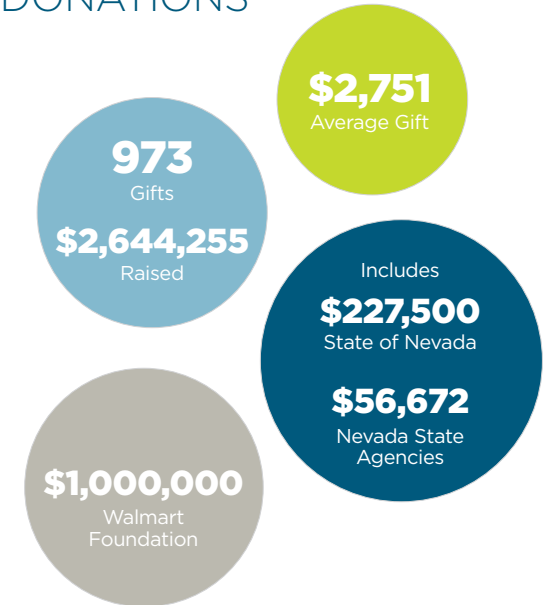
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## GENERATIONS

“The first class I went to was DUI for judges, drunk-driving cases for judges. One of the activities during the three days was going to an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting. It’s one of the most powerful things I’ve ever attended. I’d never been to an AA meeting.... I heard people talk about real struggles with alcohol from so many different perspectives and walks of life. It was one of the most important experiences I’ve ever had as a judge. It was one of the defining moments in my young judicial career.”

— **Magistrate Judge David M. Hooper,**  
Marion Superior Court, Criminal Division, Indianapolis

## GENERATIONS

“When I came back, I was inspired, motivated and stimulated; I thought I could change the world. I started the first judicial education program in the state of West Virginia through The National Judicial College. I’m very appreciative of the NJC. It gave me a running start.”

— **Hon. George R. Triplett (Ret.)**, former circuit court judge of Randolph County, West Virginia. He completed five courses with the NJC, starting with *General Jurisdiction* in 1968.

## GRANT SUPPORT

In 2022, The National Judicial College held cooperative agreements with the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance. The NJC serves as a sub-recipient on U.S. Department of Justice cooperative agreements with the University of North Dakota School of Law Tribal Judicial Institute.

The NJC also serves as a sub-recipient on two U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration cooperative agreements awarded to the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry. These are important collaborations between medical professionals and the legal system on the topic of opioids.

The NJC partnered with the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration’s Commercial Driver’s License program to provide traffic safety education to judges.

The NJC also receives grants from the State Justice Institute, a nonprofit organization established by federal law in 1984 to award grants to improve the quality of justice in state courts, and to foster innovative, efficient solutions to common issues faced by all courts.



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## GENERATIONS

“I was the first person in my family to graduate from college, and I was the second person in my family to be a judge. My grandfather’s brother was a magistrate judge in the 1970s. I was elected in 2006, and I wanted to get proper training for my new job. I signed up for the NJC for the new-judge’s classes. I enjoyed meeting judges from other parts of the country and the teachers ... were exceptional and brilliant.”

— **Hon. Ernest L. Ortega**, presiding judge, Taos (NM) Magistrate Court

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Here's how to make a gift that will benefit you now and support the College for all time.

The National Judicial College has played a key role in educating judges since 1963. Through your will, a charitable remainder or life trust, or by naming the NJC as the beneficiary of your life insurance or IRA, you can help the NJC continue to provide judges with the knowledge, skills and abilities vital for their role on the bench.

Here are the most popular Planned Giving options:

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Leave the NJC a dollar amount or a percentage of your estate. Reduce your estate tax base by the full amount of the gift.

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Name the NJC as a beneficiary for the whole or part of a life insurance policy that is prepaid but is no longer needed by your family.

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Name the NJC as a beneficiary to all or part of your IRA and your gift will pass tax free.

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Place cash or property worth \$100,000 or more into a trust to provide you with income for life or a term of years. The remainder will be distributed to the NJC.

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Place cash or property in a trust that pays a fixed amount to the NJC for a term of years. Upon the completion of the term, the assets transfer to the NJC.

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If there are judicial causes you care about, we can help you have a positive impact by making a planned gift to support NJC course development in a specific area of the law. Choose from Administrative Law, Appellate Law, General Jurisdiction, Military, Special Court or Tribal.

### Scholarships

If you prefer to provide scholarship assistance, with a minimum gift of \$50,000 you can endow a scholarship in your name, the name of a loved one, or of a colleague.

A scholarship endowment of \$50,000 will generate proceeds to bring new judges to the *General Jurisdiction* course for decades to come.

### Legacy Council

The NJC Legacy Council is a growing group of judges, attorneys and friends who have included the NJC in their estate plans.

If you have already named us as a beneficiary of a planned gift, please let us know by filling out the "Planned Giving Statement of Intent" form available at the NJC website, [Judges.org](https://www.judges.org) (Donate > Legacy Giving), so we may enroll you as a Legacy Council Member.

Contact our Advancement Department at [njc-development@judges.org](mailto:njc-development@judges.org) for more details.

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“To be able to return now . . . and see how amazing the courses and instructors are here has been a wonderful and educational experience. I have nothing but praise for the time that I have had here.”

— **Hon. Justin Champagne**, who began his association with the NJC as an intern from the University of Nevada, Reno journalism school in 1995 and returned in 2023 as a Reno Municipal Court judge to take *Special Courts Jurisdiction: Advanced*

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Governors

### AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS

Appellate Judges  
Education Institute  
Dividing the Waters

### GENERATIONS

“When I first anticipated attending a class at the NJC, I'd been an administrative law judge for 14 years. I had the highest caseload in my state.... I dreaded going to work each day. I'd heard of a place in Nevada that offered professional development for judges of all kinds. Unlike all other continuing legal education courses I'd attended, the instructors for this course were experienced administrative law judges themselves.... The education I received in that two-week course changed my working life for the rest of my 31-year career. I never dreaded going to work again. More importantly I became a much better judge.... During the remainder of my career, many petitioners against whom I had ruled thanked me at the conclusion of their hearing because they had been heard, understood and treated with respect. I thank the NJC for making me the type of judge that those folks wanted to thank.”

— **Hon. Toni Boone (Ret.)** has now taught at the NJC for more than 20 years.

## GENERATIONS

“The NJC means that I have pride in the integrity of the judicial system in the United States, and that is a key to our whole nation.”

—Senior Circuit Court Judge Roberta A. Coates, Cheyenne, Wyoming

### PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

American Academy of  
Addiction Psychiatry  
American Association for Justice  
American Bar Association  
ABA Commission on Lawyer Assistance  
Programs (CoLAP)  
ABA Judicial Division  
ABA Rule of Law Initiative  
ABA Section of Litigation  
ABA Tort Trial and Insurance Practice  
Section  
American Board of Trial Advocates  
American College of Trial Lawyers  
American Institute of Certified Public  
Accountants  
American Judges Association  
Appellate Judges Education Institute  
Arkansas Administrative Office  
of the Courts  
Association of Defense Trial Attorneys  
Blackfeet Nation  
Boys and Girls Club of Elko County  
Boys and Girls Club of Truckee Meadows  
Brennan Center for Justice  
Bureau of Indian Affairs  
California Association of Youth Courts  
Center for Court Innovation  
Center for Health and Justice at TASC Inc.  
Center for Human Trafficking  
Center for Judicial Education  
and Research  
Center for Public Policy Studies  
Center for Statistics and Applications  
in Forensic Evidence (CSAFE)  
Central Panel Directors  
Children's Cabinet  
Conference of Chief Justices Conference  
of State Court Administrators

Civilian Board of Contract Appeals  
Connecticut Bar Association  
Council of State Governments  
DEI Collaborative  
Dividing the Waters  
DRI — The Voice of the Defense Bar  
Environmental Law Institute  
Federal Bar Association  
Federal Court of Australia  
Flaschner Judicial Institute  
Florida Department of Highway Safety  
and Motor Vehicles, Bureau of  
Administrative Reviews  
Foundation for Advancing  
Alcohol Responsibility  
Fred T. Korematsu Center for Law  
and Equality  
The Future Society  
Governors Highway Safety Association  
H5  
Hispanic National Bar Association  
Judicial Division  
Human Trafficking Court Solutions  
Illinois Judicial College  
Indiana Judicial Center  
Institute for the Advancement of the  
American Legal System  
Institute for Well-Being in Law  
IEEE-Institute of Electrical and  
Electronics Engineers  
International Academy of Trial Lawyers  
International Association of  
Defense Counsel  
International Association of  
LGBTQ+ Judges  
International Society of Barristers  
Jain Family Institute  
Judicial Research Institute of the  
Supreme Court of Korea  
Justice Management Institute  
Justice Michael Douglas Fellowship  
Justice Speakers Institute

Kansas Supreme Court, Office of  
Judicial Administration  
Law School Admission Council  
Lexpat Global Services, LLC  
Louisiana Division of Administrative Law  
Loyola Law School  
Minnesota Department of Human  
Services, Appeals and Regulations  
Division  
Minnesota State Court Administrator's  
Office, Judicial Education Division  
National American Indian Court Judges  
Association  
National Asian Pacific American Bar  
Association Foundation  
National Asian Pacific American Bar  
Association Judicial Council  
National Association for Presiding  
Judges and Court Executive Officers  
National Association of Administrative  
Law Judiciary  
National Association of Drug Court  
Professionals  
National Association of Hearing Officials  
National Association of State Judicial  
Educators  
National Association of Women Judges  
National Bar Association  
National Bar Association Judicial Council  
National Center for State Courts  
National Conference of Specialized  
Court Judges  
National Conference of Women's Bar  
Associations  
National Congress of American Indians  
National Consortium on Racial and  
Ethnic Fairness in the Courts  
National Council of Juvenile and Family  
Court Judges  
National Indian Child Welfare  
Association  
National Judges Association  
National Native American Bar  
Association

Native Community Development  
Associates  
Nevada Coalition to End Domestic  
and Sexual Violence  
Nevada Department of Public Safety  
Nevada Office of the Attorney General  
Nevada White Collar Crime Center  
New England Bar Association  
New York State Unified Court System  
Judicial Institute  
Ninth Judicial Circuit Historical Society  
Northern Nevada International Center  
Ozmen Institute for Global Studies  
Pacific Judicial Strengthening Initiative  
Pretrial Justice Institute  
Reno + Sparks Chamber of Commerce  
Singapore Judicial College  
State of Nevada  
Stetson University College of Law  
Supreme Court Historical Society  
Tennessee Administrative Office  
of the Courts  
Tetra Tech DPK  
Thirty-Seven Wines  
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UNESCO  
United States Department of  
Agriculture, National Appeals Board  
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UNLV William S. Boyd School of Law  
UNR Judicial Studies Graduate Degree  
Program  
Wayamo Foundation  
Williams Institute at the UCLA School  
of Law  
World Justice Project  
Yakama Nation

## Made in the NJC

Since its launch in 2019, the College's *Judicial Academy* for attorneys who aspire to become judges has seen 20 of its graduates make it to the bench. Here they are in alphabetical order. See p. 3 for more information on the "class" of 2022.



*Hon. Olga Álvarez*



*Hon. Natasha Anderson*



*Hon. José Scher Castillo*



*Hon. Tsering D. Cornell*



*Hon. Travis Fliehman*



*Hon. Christine J. Gonong*



*Hon. Jaime Hawk*



*Hon. Robert Lara*



*Hon. Andrew Luxen*



*Hon. Marie A. Moses*



*Hon. Patrice "Patti" W. Oppenheim*



*Hon. Joshua Patrick*



*Hon. Amy Peterman*



*Hon. Jeffrey Phillips*



*Hon. Rania Rampersad*



*Hon. Chris Sease*



*Hon. Kiah D. Spinks*



*Hon. Catherine Taylor*



*Hon. Lorrie Sinclair Taylor*



*Hon. Sherry Thompson-Taylor*



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