

VP OF DISTRICTS ANNUAL REPORT
October 2020

As we round out this most interesting year, I must commend our District Directors on their ingenuity and can-do spirit despite the constraints posed by the pandemic. Our monthly Zoom calls presented an opportunity to exchange ideas on what the districts could best do to engage members and fulfill NAWJ's mission. There were Zoom book clubs, Zoom educational programs, Zoom discussions of movies and Zoom Mentor Jets. I was pleased to participate in District 7's Mentor Jet and District 4's Zoom on Transgender Issues. But for the pandemic and Zoom, I would not have been able to do so. Thus, there are definite positives which arise out of the difficulties posed by the pandemic.

I am pleased that Pam Washington from District 13 will follow me as VP of Districts. She will do an amazing job and will continue to inspire and engage our District Directors and NAWJ's members.

We started out pre pandemic, meeting in person over dinner in New Orleans at the mid-year conference where we learned a lot about one another and explored what being a District Director meant to each of us. Post pandemic, we got to know each other virtually. We are a diverse group with amazing backgrounds, but we are bound together by our mutual love of NAWJ.

Below are the reports from the Districts.

Elizabeth Allen White
VP of Districts

Annual Report from District One
Honorable Mary Dacey White

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

Fall – Winter, 2019



Judge Horan is pictured with her family above at MJC Annual Dinner

Congratulations to our sister, the **Hon. Diana H. Horan**, First Justice of the Worcester Housing Court on her receiving the 2019 **Judicial Excellence Award** from the Massachusetts Judicial conference on November 5, 2019, at The College of the Holy Cross. We are all so proud of her!!!!

On **December 5, 2019, at 6 PM, NAWJ** cosponsored a dinner at Paul and Elizabeth's, 150 Main Street in Northampton, Massachusetts. Hon. Maureen Walsh, of the District Court organized the event. As a result of the dinner, NAWJ got new members and some lapsed members even rejoined. It was a very successful event, 23 judges attended! See the attendees below!

ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT:

I attended the Annual Conference in Los Angeles from Oct. 15th – 19th, 2019. It was a fabulous conference. Judge Elizabeth Allen White, of LA was the chair and she outdid herself!!!!

The following District One members attended the Annual Conference: Chief Justice Paula Carey, Hon. Anne Kenney Chaplin (Housing Court), Hon. Fairlie Dalton (Housing Court), Hon. Nan Duffly (Ret. Supreme Judicial Court), Hon. Stacey Fortes (District Court), Hon. Karen Green (Superior Court), Hon. Germarie Mendez-Negron, (Puerto Rico), Chief Justice Amy Nechtem (Juvenile Court), and Hon. Mary Dacey White (District court).



Amy Nechtem, Stacey Fortes, Karen Green, Mary Lou Muirhead, Mary Dacey White, Nan Duffly, Germarie Mendez-Negron and Fairlie Dalton (left to right)

WINTER – SPRING, 2020



District One judges shared their time and expertise with members of the bar by serving as faculty and presenters for several educational programs in the past year. In addition to speaking at local bar and community events, these judges served at programs sponsored by Massachusetts Continuing Legal Education. Programs included judicial forums, trial and mediation skills workshops, as well as seminars on substantive areas and emerging areas of the law. Thank you to the following judges who shared their expertise with practitioners at MCLE programs:

The following is the list of women judges appointed to the Trial Court in Massachusetts from February, 2019 to January, 2020: **Jennifer Allen, Middlesex Probate Court; Jacqueline Burchill, Plymouth Probate Court; Terri Klug Cafazzo, Probate Court; Jackie Cowin, Superior Court; Catherine Ham, BMC – Dorchester; Karen Hennessy, Essex Juvenile Court; Kathleen McCarthy-Neyman, Superior court; Jennifer McNulty, Worcester Juvenile court; Jennifer Queally, District Court and Jennifer Roberts, Land Court.**



2019 Event

On a sad note, a former member of NAWJ and First Justice Marie Jackson-Thompson of Woburn District court passed away. She is with the former First Justice Phyllis Broker of Woburn Court at their joint portrait unveiling. Judge Jackson-Thompson is on the right as you look at the picture. We wish all her friends and family, our sincere sympathies.



News from Puerto Rico:

Submitted by: Hon. Germarie Mendez Negrón

Our most recent initiative in the Puerto Rico Judicial Branch involves a public service campaign entitled “Violence is not Love” (translated from Spanish “Violencia no es Amor”) designed to educate the community about gender equality and the judicial remedies available for domestic violence cases. The campaign, which was launched International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, consists of a video and posts that have been shared in the official social media accounts of the Judicial Branch and that directs people to the micro website www.violencianoesamor.pr where they can find information on how to identify domestic violence, about our specialized courts domestic violence courts, and how to request a protective order, among other relevant services.

ANNUAL REPORT FROM DISTRICT 2

Hon. Kathy J. King

NY, CT and VT

Recent Events:

Judges of the Eighth Judicial District at a memorial observance on Friday, September 25, 2020 in recognition of the Hon. Ruth Bader Ginsburg. **Hon. Shirley Troutman**, NAWJ NY Chapter, President Elect, presented remarks at the event.



District 2 Director Judge King and Judge Quinones held virtual summer internship programs in their respective courts which were concluded at the end of August. Interns participated in virtual court hearings and engaged in virtual group discussions.

Developing Projects:

A Color of Justice program which was scheduled to be held in May 2020 has been postponed due to the pandemic; however, the planning committee is holding a teleconference in mid-October to discuss hosting a Color of Justice program in 2021.

A pilot internship program is being developed for high school girls at Saint Barnabas High School, an all girls Catholic High School in Bronx County, New York. The criteria for participation in the internship is presently being worked on and NAWJ members sitting in Bronx County are being asked to sign-up for the program. Roll out of the program is targeted for September 2021.

District 2 is forming a planning committee for the purpose of creating a tribute to honor the legacy of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg.

Upcoming Events:

NAWJ NY Chapter will be co-sponsoring a 2-hour virtual CLE program on October 28, 2020 with the Third Judicial District Gender Fairness Committee on Domestic Violence Trends in the Context of Bail Reform and the COVID-19 Pandemic.

District 2 is planning to host a virtual networking party in November 2020 for new members to discuss membership engagement and the challenges faced as a judge during the pandemic.

Annual Report from District 3 Honorable Vivian L. Medinilla

Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and the Virgin Islands

As we mourn the loss of *The Honorable Ruth Bader Ginsburg*, our sisters in law take a moment to reflect on how our hero inspired us locally and nationally. Her impact started with me in 1993 when she began her term with the Supreme Court and I graduated from law school. Certainly, we will do more to honor her in the months and years ahead but here are just a few highlights from District 3 about how we celebrate and take care of women just as Justice Ginsburg would want us to do.

On October 22, 2020 from 1-2:15, the Richards, **Layton & Finger's Women's Initiative will host a virtual discussion on best practices for advancing women in the law, especially in light of the pandemic and its impact going forward.** The presentation will focus on why experienced women are leaving the practice of law, the impact COVID-19 is having on women within the legal profession, best practices for law firms to enhance their efforts to advance women lawyers, and what women lawyers can do today to put their careers on a secure path. The following fantastic female panelists will undoubtedly offer a lively discussion:

PAULETTE BROWN, Senior Partner & Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer, Locke Lord LLP; and Past President, American Bar Association

STEPHANIE A. SCHARF, Partner, Scharf Banks Marmor LLC; Principal, The Red Bee Group; Immediate Past Chair, ABA Commission on Women in the Profession.

ROBERTA D. LIEBENBERG, Partner Fine, Kaplan & Black, R.P.C.; Principal, The Red Bee Group; Former Chair, ABA Commission on Women in the Profession.

Each year, the Biden Institute, in partnership with the University of Delaware Women's Leadership Initiative, celebrates the accomplishments of one woman that is making a difference in Delaware and beyond. **On October 7, 2020, Valerie Biden Owens, Vice-chair of the Biden Institute honored** Justice Montgomery-Reeves as this year's honoree in a virtual Zoom ceremony. Justice Montgomery-Reeves broke barriers on the Delaware judiciary when she became the first African American woman to serve on the Delaware Supreme Court — and one of the very few African American women to sit on a state's highest court in American history. Justice Tamika R. Montgomery-Reeves was sworn to Delaware's highest court on December 5, 2019. Before then, she served as a Vice Chancellor of the Delaware Court of Chancery from November 2015 to November 2019. She engaged students, lawyers, and other judges in a conversation about what it takes to break professional ceilings.

Speaking of breaking ceilings, we take a moment to send a shout out to an all-female firm in the Philadelphia area:

Griesing Law, LLC is a full-service women-owned and operated law firm based in Philadelphia with satellite offices in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, Cincinnati and New York. They are certified as a woman-owned business, focused on promoting diversity and inclusion in the legal profession.

Francine Friedman Griesing is the founder and Managing Member of Griesing Law, LLC. Prior to launching Griesing Law, LLC in 2010, she practiced law at top tier firms in New York and Philadelphia and she also served as Chair of Litigation of Philadelphia's City Solicitor's Office under former Mayor Edward G. Rendell, who later served as Governor of Pennsylvania. As the City's top trial lawyer from 1997 to 2000, Ms. Griesing advised the Mayor, ranking administration officials and City Council on cutting-edge legal issues, handling over 2,000 cases per year, supervising 75 lawyers plus staff, and overseeing outside counsel. With two others, she founded the firm a decade ago with only a handful of clients and operated out of an 800 square foot sublet space. Today, they have grown to a firm of eight lawyers and handle matters Fortune 500 companies, small and privately held business, nonprofits, government entities and individuals. They are licensed to practice law in Florida, Kentucky, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and South Carolina. They have been recognized by: Best Lawyers, Chambers & Partners, Super Lawyers, Client Choice, Pennsylvania's Best 50 Women in Business, Philadelphia Inquirer's Influencers of Law Lifetime Achievement Award, Philadelphia Business Journal's Women of Distinction, Philadelphia Business Journal's Best of the Bar, American Bar Association's Excellence in Legal Writing Award, The Legal Intelligencer's Lawyers on the Fast Track and many others. They were also selected by in-house counsel as the 2013 Law Firm MVP by the National Association of Minority and Women Owned Law Firms, by SmartCEO as the 2014 Philadelphia Law Firm of the Year and by the Philadelphia Business Journal as one of the

2017 Soaring 76 for being one of the fastest growing companies in the Greater Philadelphia area. Kudos!

Finally, Delaware is ready for its Inaugural Virtual Sisters in Success (Success In and Out,) currently scheduled for November 20, 2020. This year's theme, *Thanks and Gratefulness*, will include recorded videos of Department of Correction staff, committee members and volunteers giving a statement of something for which they are grateful. The Steering Committee continues to put together this program to include inspiring remarks from others including "justice-involved" women to discuss successful transitions into the community.

**Annual Report from District 4
Honorable Anita Josey-Herring**

District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia

Since our last report in September, District 4 and the International Association of Women Judges ("IAWJ") have fully planned the screening of the film "The Judge." This film, which will be shown on October 24, 2020 from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m., will be followed by a discussion moderated by IAWJ President and District of Columbia Court of Appeals Judge Vanessa Ruiz. The event is also co-sponsored by the Hispanic Bar Association of D.C., the South Asian Bar of D.C. and the Greater Washington Area, Women's Division, National Bar Association.

**Annual Report from District 5
Honorable Anne Elizabeth Barnes**

Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina

Cindy Morris
Judge, Superior Court
Conasauga Judicial Circuit

The Conasauga Judicial Circuit was awarded a grant for a Veterans Accountability Court. Judge Morris will be presiding judge for that court. Judge Morris was also honored to be named chair-elect of the Georgia Commission on Dispute Resolution. Judge Morris will try to adequately follow in the footsteps of her dear friend and colleague Judge Jane Barwick, the current chairperson.

Cassandra Kirk
Chief Judge, Magistrate Court
Fulton County

Under the leadership of Chief Magistrate Judge Cassandra Kirk, the Magistrate Court of Fulton County lived out its mission to Inform, Engage and Empower Our Community. Chief Judge Kirk led the Magistrate Court in community outreach efforts that included: free private wedding ceremonies, two Statewide Judicial trainings, establishing Maggie, the Magistrate Court ChatBot, and partnering with multiple Atlanta-based nonprofits to provide free legal clinics, bike and clothing drives, and partial rental payments for landlord-tenant parties for Fulton County citizens. Within the past year the Magistrate Court has celebrated three (3) graduations, bringing our total number to eight (8) since July 2018 for our Misdemeanor Mental Health Court (MMC) led by Chief Judge Kirk and State Court Judge Patsy Porter. Our MMC became a state- certified Georgia Accountability Court in June of 2020.

The Magistrate Court received a Clearance Rate Excellence Award on behalf of the Standing Committee on Judicial Workload Assessment of the Administrative Office of the Courts, recognizing our clearance rate of 254% over three years.

With the COVID-19 pandemic and the Statewide Judicial Emergency, the Magistrate Court of Fulton County worked diligently to transition the court to a successful virtual environment for all case types and mediations. This has been an ongoing process as we learn and assesses the needs of community members and adjust accordingly by also creating FAQs for Landlord-Tenant cases and establishing a “coronavirus court update” page specifically for information related to the COVID-19 pandemic. We interviewed and on-boarded summer interns and 6 new Magistrate Judges: Sheryl Barnes, Ashley (Gholamhosseini) Drake, Elizabeth Emmanuel, Brandy Brooks Johnson, Jennifer Neal-Jones, and Raquel Pope.

The Fulton County Magistrate Court would also like to congratulate Magistrate Judge Melynee Leftridge-Harris on her successful campaign to be a Superior Court Judge. Judge Leftridge-Harris will be taking the bench as a Fulton County Superior Court Judge in January of 2021.

Judge Tanya Brinkley

Judge Brinkley was elected District 5 Director unanimously and without opposition on September 24, 202. She was nominated by Judge Lisa Walsh. Before her election to the bench she had a distinguished career as a lawyer, where she litigated complex criminal, family, and civil law. “ In a quasi-judicial role, she served as a Civil Traffic Infraction Hearing Officer as well. Judge Brinkley was elected to the bench, and subsequently appointed to the circuit court, where she serves as my colleague.

Judge Brinkley currently serves in the criminal division, after serving in the county civil and criminal divisions, and as the Associate Administrative Judge of the domestic violence division.

Judge Brinkley is proud of her leadership in the National Association of Women Judges where she served on the Women in Prison Committee, and has been active in civics training for students. Judge Brinkley has been honored by Legacy Magazine as one of the 25 Most Influential and Prominent Black Women in Business in South Florida, and one of the 2017 Women of Substance by Miami-Dade County Black Affairs Advisory Board and Commission for Women, as well as various other organizations for her prior legal work, service to the community, and judicial commitment.

She served on the 2018 Miami-Dade Canvassing Board presiding over Florida's historic triple recount, and many other canvassing boards for several years. Judge Brinkley has also served on the City of Miami Civilian Review Board, the City of Miami Asset Review Board, and Florida Bar Traffic Rules Committee. Her community involvement extends from youth mentoring through countless organizations, legal mentoring of law students and young lawyers, work with the sickle cell anemia community, and other community organizations.

She serves on the Florida Bar Committees on Student Education and Admission to the Bar and the Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Judge Brinkley is also an appointee to the Florida Supreme Court Standing Committee on Fairness and Diversity, where she serves as the Technology Committee Chair, and on the education and outreach committees.

Judge Brinkley is also an Office of State Courts Judicial Faculty Member and has taught continuing medical education to medical doctors related to domestic violence. She currently serves on the Dade County Bar Association Professionalism Committee, and chaired many committees for the Dade County Bar Association Women of Distinction annual galas. Judge Brinkley is also a member of the Wilkie D. Ferguson Lawyers Association, Gwen S. Cherry Black Women Lawyers Association, Cuban American Bar Association, the Florida Association of Women Lawyers, and the Virgil Hawkins Bar Association".

Hon. Lisa Walsh 11th

Judicial Circuit

Administrative Judge, Appellate Division

NAWJ Technology Committee Chair

The Honorable Lisa Walsh was recognized with NAWJ's Norma Wikler Award | National Association of Women Judges

<https://www.nawj.org/blog/newsroom/news/nawj-technology-committee-chair-the-honorable-lisa-walsh-recognized-with-nawjs-norma-wikler-award>

The 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic broke immediately after our Midyear Conference in New Orleans in March 2020. Within weeks our country was shut down and courts scrambled to develop alternative means to provide court services to the public. Our nation's court systems have been restricted to essential services, and jury trials have been universally tolled. Within weeks, NAWJ turned our attention to providing education, information and guidance through alternative methods to serve our members and benefit the branch.

NAWJ President Judge Bernadette D'Souza reauthorized the Technology Committee and appointed me as Chair. President D'Souza also created the COVID-19 Task Force, Chaired by Judge Elizabeth Lee and Judge Elizabeth White, which worked closely in tandem with the Technology Committee. NAWJ has held webinars addressing our needs as judicial members and leaders ever since. In addition, Judge Elizabeth Lee began NAWJ's podcast program, and Judge Mimi Tsankov has produced a podcast on immigration courts, which may be accessed on our website here:

<https://www.nawj.org/newsletter-archive/podcast-series-immigration-and-the-courts>

Finally, the COVID-19 Taskforce in conjunction with the Technology Committee posted a COVID-19 resources page located at: <https://www.nawj.org/covid-19>. Among the documents located here is a comparison between jurisdictions on responses to the pandemic. Our President, Judge Bernadette D'Souza, presided at each webinar and gave remarks. The following Webinars were presented by NAWJ:

May 13, 2020 Courts on the Frontline: Providing Access to Justice While Protecting Public Health During a Pandemic.

This webinar featured the remarks of four state court chief justices: Chief Justice and Past-President Anna Blackburne-Rigsby, District of Columbia Court of Appeals, Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye, California, Chief Justice Susan Christensen, Iowa and Chief Justice Bridget Mary McCormack, Michigan. This webinar provided our viewers with a comparison of best practices during a pandemic across diverse jurisdictions. A comparison of strategies employed in urban, rural and suburban jurisdictions allowed the viewers to derive new practices and solutions to urgent issues in the pandemic.

May 19, 2020 Courtroom Tools for Addressing Human Trafficking, Domestic and Sexual Violence and Child Exploitation in the Time of COVID-19.

Judge Ann Breen-Greco, Independent Administrative Judicial Professional, Chicago, Illinois, moderated a panel that included: Judge Pamila Brown, District Court of Maryland, Howard County, Judge Virginia M. Kendall, United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, Summer Stephan, San Diego County District Attorney, and Christi Wigle, CEO of United Against Slavery. This webinar explored current international dynamics at place in the trafficking of human beings, the local perspective of how trafficking manifests itself in communities and local agencies responses, the ways in which we can improve services to

victims, and what is taking place in our courts during the pandemic. This webinar was cosponsored by: American Bar Association Commission on Domestic and Sexual Violence, American Bar Association Judicial Division, Illinois State Bar Association Women and Law Committee, National Association of Administrative Law Judiciary, and United Against Slavery.

June 30, 2020: The Pandemic - What Is Its Impact on Our Civil Courts

Technology Committee Chair and Past-President Judge Lisa Walsh moderated a discussion with Judge Jennifer Bailey, Administrative Judge of the Civil Division of the 11th Judicial Circuit in Miami, Judge Samantha Jessner, Supervising Judge of the Civil Division in Los Angeles Superior Court and Judge Lisette Shirdan-Harris, Presiding Judge of the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas. This session addressed how technology can be implemented and used to achieve the goals of keeping people safe in courthouses and providing a forum for resolution of disputes.

August 12, 2020 The Critical Roles of Child Welfare Judicial Leadership and Community Collaboration: Building Resilience in the Wake of Covid-19

This Webinar addressed the pandemic's impact on vulnerable children and families in the child welfare system. Panelists discussed how courts and communities are building resiliency through innovative solutions and strong stakeholder collaboration.

Moderator Hon. Amy L Nechtem, Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Juvenile Court Department

and NAWJ Past-President discussed these issues with panelists Hon. Elizabeth T. Clement, Associate Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court, Hon. Edwina G. Mendelson, Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Justice Initiatives, New York State Unified Court System, Hon. Anne K. McKeig, Associate Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court, in Consultation with: Hon. Patricia A. Macías, (Ret.), Judge, Texas State District Court

**Annual Report from District 6
Honorable Lynda Jones**

November 2019 – October 2020

2019



Judge Bernadette D'Souza was awarded the 2018 Icon Award. The magazine "City Business", honored Judge D'Souza as one (1) of twenty (20) business leaders who have had a lasting influence on the city's economic development and made his or her mark on the city of New Orleans overall.

Louisiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Bernette Joshua Johnson has asked Judge Sheva M. Sims to lead the Women in Prison Initiative in District 6.

Judge Ree Casey-Jones was awarded the Angels in Adoption Award in November in Washington, DC. This Congressional Award is given based on the person's outstanding work within the child welfare system.

NAWJ 41st Annual Conference - Oct 15, 2019 - All day - Oct 19, 2019 - Los Angeles, CA



2020

Chief Judge Felicia Toney Williams has been nominated to become part of the Louisiana Bar Foundation (LBF) Oral History. She is the first woman and African American to serve as Chief Judge of the Louisiana Second Circuit Court of Appeal.

On Wednesday, February 5, 2020, Chief Judge Yvette Mansfield Alexander received the Honorable A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr. Award at the National Bar Association Judicial Council Luncheon. She is currently a candidate for judge at the 19th Judicial District Court in Baton Rouge, LA, in the special election to be held on April 4, 2020. The A. Leon Higginbotham Award is presented in recognition of judicial excellence and an outstanding commitment to the achievement of justice and equality.



On Wednesday, February 5, 2020, the incomparable Chief Judge Yvette Mansfield Alexander received the Honorable A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr. Award at the National Bar Association Judicial Council. Over 100 judges, attorneys and business professionals from all over the United States and South Africa were present to celebrate.



NAWJ member, Nashville-Davidson County General Sessions Court Judge Allegra Walker on February 14, 2020, turned her Domestic Violence Courtroom into a wedding chapel and married 15 couples.



The Honorable Aleta A. Trauger, U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee, in Nashville, Tennessee, has been selected to receive the 2020 American Inns of Court Professionalism Award in the Sixth Circuit.

The Honorable Pammela S. Lattier is the first woman and first African American Chief Judge for the Shreveport City Court. Chief Judge Lattier was sworn in at Shreveport City Court on May 22, 2020.

Davidson County Presiding Judge and President Elect of the Tennessee General Sessions Judge Conference, Lynda Jones has been invited to speak on COVID - 19 in the court system by NCJFJ. Tennessee currently has over 25,000 cases with the largest percentage in Davidson County. Innovations and safety measures implemented with the Department of Health and Vanderbilt University have kept infections low in the court system.

NAWJ President Bernadette D'Souza Appoints NAWJ Members to the Advisory Council of the National Association for Court Management's "Courts in the Era of #WeToo" Education Initiative, "Courts in the Era of #WeToo" will highlight the need for court education and resources to address the need to combat sexual harassment, transgender, and LGBTQ issues in the nation's courts. The National Association for Court Management's partners include National Association of Women Judges and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

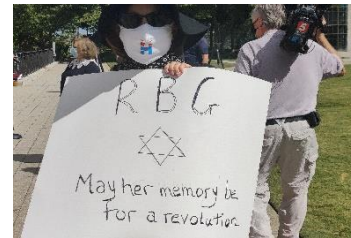
2020 Lifetime Liberty Achievement Award Recipient Judge Bernice B. Donald Circuit Judge - United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.

The Honorable Sheva M. Sims spearheads the Women in Prison Program. On August 11, 2020, Judge Sims delivered toiletries to the Louisiana Transitional Center for Women and she toured the completed cosmetology facility. Judge Sheva Sims advocates for addressing recidivism through the Women in Prison Program by implementing skills and educational reentry programs for incarcerated women at the Louisiana Transitional Center for Women (LTCW) in Tallulah and the Caddo Correctional Center (CCC) in Shreveport. Secretary James M. Le Blanc and Andrea Buttross of the Louisiana Department of Corrections are

instrumental in furnishing supplies for the cosmetology class and modifying the building. Armed with skills, education and the possibility of a clean slate, incarcerated women reentering their communities will have a better chance to find employment, a place to live and the opportunity to live successful lives.

A **NEW** pilot program aimed at keeping homeless individuals from cycling in and out of jail launched September 2020, in Nashville. The court will be presided over by General Sessions Judge Lynda Jones. Proceedings will be held at Room in the Inn, a local homeless shelter. The new court will offer people the chance to wipe certain minor charges from their record if they engage with local service providers. But unlike other specialty courts, defendants will not be required to complete a specific program of treatment.

On October 2, 2020, a walk **HONORING RUTH BADER GINSBURG** was held at the Metro Courthouse. A group gathered at Public Square Park at 1 p.m. to honor Justice Ginsburg. The event marked the end of “shiva,” which is the seven-day period of initial mourning following someone’s burial. The group hosted a short program of speakers and walk around the Metro-Nashville Courthouse. Upon returning to the park, they said the ‘Mourner’s Kaddish.’



Nashville-Davidson County General Sessions Court Judge Allegra Walker, will spearhead the Color of Justice in Nashville, Tennessee.

**Annual Report from District 7
Honorable Michelle Rick**

Michigan, Ohio, West Virginia

MICHIGAN

I was sworn in as the Director of District 7 in June 2020. In January 2019, the Michigan Supreme Court recognized Judge Michelle M. Rick as a judge who gives back and makes a difference. One of the many ways that I continue to give back is by serving as a District Director of the National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ). I am pleased to report that despite the pandemic and short period of time that I have served as a District Director, there has been a swell of activity to report.

None of this activity would have been possible without the strong leadership of Michigan's state co-chairs, Zenell Brown and Cori Barkman.

MEET MICHIGAN'S STATE CO-CHAIRS



Zenell Brown currently serves as the Executive Court Administrator of the Third Circuit Court. She has previously served as the Friend of the Court, Enforcement Director, and Senior Staff Attorney, as well as mediator at the Third Circuit Court. She is a certified diversity professional; co-author of a SCAO approved mediation training curriculum; and, contributing author to various local and national publications on the topics of diversity and inclusion, and alternative dispute resolution.



Cori Barkman is currently First Assistant Attorney General for the Michigan Department of Corrections Division of the Attorney General's Office of Michigan. In this role she assists the Division Chief in overseeing the overall operation of the MDOC Division with a specific focus in Complex and class action litigation in both state and federal court.

CHIEF JUSTICE BRIDGET MARY MCCORMACK, NAWJ MEMBER & WEBINAR PANELIST

Michigan's Chief Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court and NAWJ member Justice Bridget McCormack was a panelist at one of the first of NAWJ's webinars related to the pandemic. The event was held on May 13, 2020 and was entitled Courts of the Frontline: Providing Access to Justice While Protecting Public Health during a Pandemic. Justice McCormack spoke about the efforts Michigan's judiciary had taken, under her strong leadership, to ensure access to justice since March 2020. She also addressed how the Michigan Supreme Court has formulated policies, rules, and processes to enable the state trial courts to remain open, accessible, and safe during the public health crisis.



PROJECT ACCESS RECEIVES MICHIGAN STATE BAR LEADERSHIP AWARD

In late July 2020, Project Access was notified it was the recipient of the State Bar of Michigan Kimberly M. Cahill Bar Leadership Award. Project Access was a traveling expungement clinic that brought law students into rural parts of Michigan to assist the poor with preparing expungement petitions. It was hailed as an example in affording access to justice in rural communities where the poor are underserved. The Kimberly M. Cahill award recognizes bar associations, programs, and leaders for their excellence in promoting the ideal of professionalism or equal justice for all, or in responding to a legal need within a community. Following Project Access, Michigan's legislature passed legislation designed to provide automatic expungements for certain offenses, and it expanded the ability of litigants to seek expungements.



Project Access kick-off at the Michigan Supreme Court Hall of Justice 7/25/19. Pictured from left to right: Michigan Court of Appeals Chief Judge Christopher Murray; Michigan Court of Appeals Judge Michael Riordan; UDM Law Professor Nick Schroek; Michigan Legal Help staff attorney Michael Kiehne, 3 UDM law students; Michigan State Bar Foundation Director Jennifer Bentley; Chief Justice Bridget McCormack; UDM Law Dean Phyllis Crocker; 2 law students; UDM

Law Clinical Programs Director Rebecca Nowak; 1 law student; Michigan Assistant Attorney General John Pallas; 46thCircuit Judge Colin Hunter; 1 law student; Judge Michelle Rick; Gratiot County Clerk Angie Thompson; 1 law student.



UDM Law Clinical Director Rebecca Nowak, Michigan Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist, Judge Michelle Rick, Judge Audrey Van Alst (Cadillac, MI)



(Back row) UDM Law Professor Nick Schroek, Michigan Assigned Counsel Brad Hall, 46th Circuit Court Judge George Mertz, 46th Circuit Court Judge Colin Hunter; students, & volunteers at the Gaylord Circuit Courthouse.

COORDINATED PROJECTS WITH WOMEN LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

On September 25, Michigan's NAWJ, together with the Women Lawyers Association (WLAM) held a virtual book club night. The sold-out event featured a discussion with author Minda Hart. Hart discussed her book, *The Memo*. The Memo speaks on women of color in the workplace, including the needed ally-ship of women of color and white women so everyone can lean in and move gender diversity forward. Members in attendance included not only lawyers and judges from Michigan, but several colleagues from Canada. The group was very enthusiastic about the topic, and several have requested that we continue meeting.

A second coordinated event is planned with WLAM on Thursday, October 22. NAWJ State Co-Chair Zenell Brown will be moderating an interactive roundtable on the topic of Women's Health & Racial Disparities in Healthcare. The event is being promoted on the NAWJ website. Details of this informative evening follow.

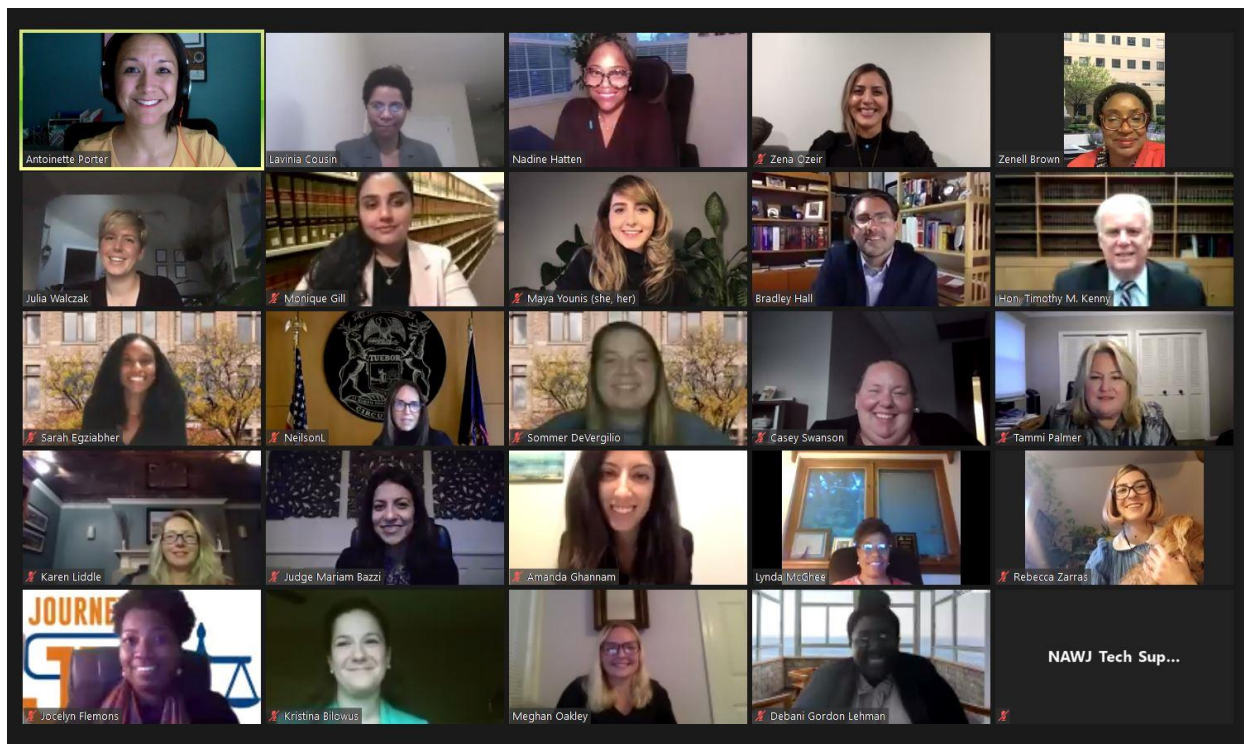
FACE OF JUSTICE

NAWJ state co-chair Cori Barkman has begun preliminary discussions with Judges in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, as well as with Tribal Judges and the State Bar of Michigan. Planning is just getting underway which will involve a Face of Justice Program in Michigan's rural Upper Peninsula. Michigan's Face of Justice Program is modeled after NAWJ's flagship Color of Justice Program.

MENTORJET

Michigan had intended to hold a MentorJet at the Detroit Mercy Law School in April. The event, co-sponsored by UDM Law, and the UDM Women's Law Caucus, had to be postponed due to the pandemic.

With tremendous help and talent of NAWJ's beloved Senior Manager, Programs & Publications, Lavinia Cousins and Operations guru and co-founder and CEO of the Colli Gorg Group, Brian Gorg, a virtual MentorJet event was held on October 1, 2020. It was quite a delight to have the Chair of District Directors, Judge Elizabeth White participate in the seminal voyage of MentorJet by Zoom. The event was well-attended and was a resounding success. A debrief is planned in the near future in hopes that the model can be used by other state chapters in the future. A program (listing the agenda mentors) and photos follow.



MEDIA RELEASE

Now that Michigan has its team in place, we are turning to the media to advertise the organization in various legal publications. We are also hopeful that this announcement will inspire attorneys, law students, and judges who are passionate about the mission of NAWJ to join the organization. Increasing membership is particularly important as Michigan also begins to jump-start plans to host the NAWJ conference in Detroit in October 2022.

Annual Report from District 8 Honorable Ann Breen-Greco

Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky

National Association of Women Judges District Eight was a cosponsor with the ISBA Standing Committee on Women and the Law which organized a CLE program on transgender issues, presented on May 28, 2020. The program was an in-depth look at the legal issues facing the transgender community. The program covered issues facing transgender individuals when securing medical treatment, medical procedures, and/or benefits. The panel included Aisha Davis, Attorney, AIDS Foundation of Chicago; Dr. Randy Ettner, World Professional Association of Transgender Health; Professor Kim Riccardo, UIC John Marshall Law; Dr. Lauren Schechter,

Clinical Professor of Surgery, University of Illinois at Chicago, Attending Surgeon at Rush University, and Director of the Center for Gender Confirmation Surgery at Weiss Memorial Hospital; and Carolyn Wald, Attorney, Roger Baldwin Foundation of ACLU Inc., Chicago.

Subsequently, Dr. Lauren Schechter also spoke at the National Association of Women Judges District 8 meeting on medical issues facing the transgender community. He was also part of a second panel hosted by the National Association of Women Judges District 8 on a continuing discussion on transgender issues. At the time of the second panel, the Supreme Court had just issued its *Bostock* ruling that civil rights law protects gay and transgender workers from workplace discrimination. While panel members noted that this is a long overdue recognition of the civil rights protections for the transgender community it was further noted that there are still many areas in which there are no protections--in healthcare, housing. It was also noted that the current administration developed a ban on transgender people in the military which was upheld by the Supreme Court.

Participating in the panel, with Dr. Schechter, was Bryanna Jenkins, a December 2019 graduate of DePaul University College of Law in Chicago, IL. The third member of the panel was Jill Rose Quinn, a practicing attorney who just won the Democratic primary for a Cook County judicial seat. She will be unopposed in the November 2020 election and will be the first openly transgender person on the Cook County bench.

District 8 also held a program on September 24, "Women Under Attack", which is an initiative of the Illinois State Bar Association Women and the Law (WATL) Committee. District 8 will be working with WATL on this initiative. This initiative is based on three issues: a complaint against a local attorney regarding seeking sexual favors from clients on child custody matters and allegations of sexual assault of female attorneys in his office; the targeting of a federal judge, Judge Salas, which resulted in the killing of her son; and the verbal attack on Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio Cortez by another congressperson, using profanity and a gender slur. Our speakers were Judge Michelle Childs, Chair, ABA Judicial Division who discussed potential security measures for federal judges. Cindy Buys, ISBA Women and the Law (WATL) Committee Chair, introduced Erin Wilson and Dina Ninfo (WATL members). They addressed the mission statement and action platform for the "Women Under Attack" initiative, particularly with respect to anti-harassment actions for female legal professionals, to include court reporters and court clerks. Judge Breen-Greco addressed the third part of the initiative. She discussed the need to be vigilant in speaking out against the use of gender slurs against women and emphasized women should only speak up if they are in a safe space. It should not be left to women solely to address these slurs, but male family members, colleagues, and friends must also take the initiative. Articles on this topic should also be done not only for the legal profession's newsletters but for publication as broadly as possible.

NAWJ District 8 defines its immediate goal as wanting to increase membership and to develop future programs for our members and in collaboration with other entities.

Annual Report from District 9
Honorable Emily Chafa

I.O.W.A. Celebrates the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment ratification with Annual Awards event on August 18th, 2020

The Iowa Organization of Women Attorneys presents an annual award in honor of Arabella Mansfield, the first woman attorney admitted to practice law in the United States, in Mount Pleasant, Iowa, on June 15, 1869. The award is presented to a woman lawyer who exemplifies her spirit in efforts to promote and nurture women in the legal profession. Many women judges, most of them NAWJ members, received this award over the years, including Celeste Bremer, Emily Gould Chafa, Miki McGovern, Ruth Klotz, Rosemary Shaw Sackett, Donna Paulsen, Linda Neuman, Eliza Ovrom, and Anuradha Vaitheswaran.

The Iowa Organization of Women Attorneys and the Iowa Chapter of the National Bar Association present an annual award in honor of Gertrude Rush, the first African American woman lawyer admitted to practice law in Iowa, in Des Moines, Iowa, in August of 1918. Gertrude Rush co-founded the National Bar Association along with four black male Iowa lawyers in 1925, after they were denied membership in the American Bar Association due to their race. This award honors a lawyer who manifests a pioneering spirit, demonstrates leadership in the community and in the legal profession, and demonstrates concern for human and civil rights. A few women judges, some NAWJ members, received this award, including Karen Romano, Artis Reis, and Romonda Belcher.

The Iowa Organization of Women Attorneys (I.O.W.A.) presented its annual awards in person at the historic Thoreau Center in Des Moines, Iowa. A small group gathered to honor the awardees, properly masked and socially distanced. Attendees included NAWJ members Emily Chafa, Miki McGovern, Gail Sheridan-Lucht, and Elisabeth Reynoldson. NAWJ member Celeste Bremer attended in spirit, but not in person. Iowa Supreme Court Justices Edward Mansfield and Thomas Waterman attended, along with Iowa Court of Appeals Judge David May, Iowa State Bar Association leaders, and other I.O.W.A. members.

The 2020 Arabella Mansfield Award was presented to Mary Pat Gunderson, a retired Iowa District Court Judge for Polk County and scholarly writer. We celebrated her courageous call for reform in the way attorney disciplinary decisions were written. Her article made it abundantly clear that gender diversity on the bench really matters. Her article made it clear that language matters. We honored her actions to promote women in the legal profession, specifically the importance of women on the bench. Mary Pat Gunderson expressed her appreciation to I.O.W.A. for the award and stated her willingness to share her findings with a variety of judges,

lawyers and other professionals. Judge Gunderson is scheduled to be a presenter for the NAWJ Annual Conference in 2021 in Nashville, Tennessee.



2020 Gertrude Rush Award recipient Helen Miller, with INBA (Iowa Chapter of the National Bar Association) President Paxton Williams, and I.O.W.A. Annual Meeting Co-Chair Emily Chafa. August 18, 2020, at the Thoreau Center in Des Moines, Iowa.



I.O.W.A. Annual Meeting Co-Chairs Emily Chafa and Miki McGovern, with flowers commemorating the woman's suffrage movement colors of white and yellow. August 18, 2020, at the Thoreau Center in Des Moines, Iowa.



2020 Arabella Mansfield Award recipient Mary Pat Gunderson, with I.O.W.A. Annual Meeting Co-Chair Emily Chafa. August 18, 2020, at the Thoreau Center in Des Moines, Iowa.

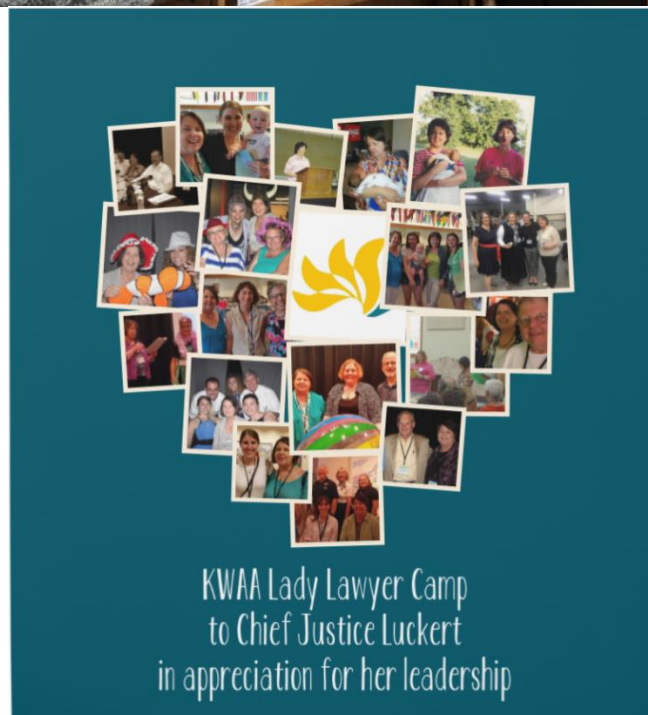
Annual Report from District 10 Honorable Cheryl A. Rios

Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota

Kansas:

- Governor Laura Kelly appointed Joan Lowdon, Leavenworth Deputy County Attorney and a resident of Bonner Springs, Kansas, to the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Michael Gibbens. Joan Lowdon will be the first woman judge in the 1st Judicial District in Kansas.
- KWAA wanted to do something to honor Chief Justice Luckert in celebration of her appointment as Chief Justice. We also wanted something unique to KWAA and Lindsborg, so we presented her with this “Lady Lawyer Camp” canvas that says: “KWAA Lady Lawyer Camp to Chief Justice Luckert in appreciation for her leadership.” It includes photos from the first KWAA conference through at least the 30th Anniversary conference. Thank you, Chief, for your service to KWAA and to the legal profession.

Chief Justice Luckert also wanted to make sure to thank KWAA for nominating her for the Kansas Bar Association Christel Marquardt Trailblazer Award. The beautiful statue she is holding was presented to her by the KBA in recognition of that honor.



Nebraska:

- Nebraska County Court Judge Linda Caster Senff, 5th Judicial District, announced her retirement effective October 31, 2020. Senff was appointed to the bench in 2005 and was retained in her position by area voters, most recently in 2014. In her letter to the Governor and Chief Justice, Senff noted, “I am honored to have been part of the Nebraska Judicial Branch which is full of dedicated judges, lawyers and staff seeking to provide legal services and access to justice for everyone.” During her 15 years on the bench, Senff volunteered on committees for both the Nebraska Supreme Court and the County Judges Association, including service on the Judicial Ethics Committee, Committee on Children and the Courts, and a select 2018 leadership group of judges working to provide consistent and transparent court records. She is a Nebraska State Bar Foundation Fellow, an honor based on the integrity and character of legal professionals who are dedicated to improving the administration of justice.

- On September 16, 2020, Governor Pete Ricketts appointed Candice J. Novak of Omaha to the Separate Juvenile Court of Douglas County, Nebraska. Novak, 41, has served as a court-appointed attorney and guardian ad litem in Douglas County and Sarpy County juvenile courts since 2005. She has also served as guardian ad litem in probate and custody matters in both Douglas and Sarpy counties. Novak holds a Bachelor of Arts in Paralegal Studies from the College of St. Mary and a Juris Doctor from the Creighton University School of Law. She is a member of the Nebraska Bar Association, American Bar Association, and National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. She also serves as Nebraska State Coordinator for the National Association of Counsel for Children. Additionally, Novak co-founded the Nebraska Guardian ad Litem Project in 2015 to promote excellence in Guardian ad Litem advocacy through training and education for licensed attorneys in Juvenile Courts in Nebraska. Novak is active in the community as a member of the St. Joan of Arc school board and home and school association. She regularly volunteers for the P.A.C.E. program, which serves at-risk youth in the community. She has also worked with organizations such as Boys Town, Child Saving Institute, and St. Francis Ministries to provide foster parent education.

**Annual Report from District 12
Honorable Colleen Clark**

Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming

Colorado is pleased to announce that 46 women have been appointed to the bench in 2019-2020. Of those listed, eight of them have been appointed to a higher position than their previous appointments. Colorado Director and current Court of Appeals Judge Jaci Brown has been appointed to the Colorado Women's Bar Association Board of Directors. We are excited for the partnership opportunities that this will create. Currently Judge Clark and Judge Brown are working on putting together a virtual happy hour to welcome all the new women judges to the bench and introduce them to the importance of the NAWJ. Judge Brown is also working on putting together a Color of Justice program here in Colorado. Colorado has been featured in *Essence* Magazine as well as numerous other publications for the recent appointment of five African American women to the bench over the last ten months. Currently several of Colorado's counties are conducting jury trials, although at a limited capacity. The new challenges of working during a pandemic have put an additional burden on working moms with young children. Judge Clark continues to participate in the statewide task force on Judicial Well-Being to hopefully continue to address these issues. As with everyone we were very discouraged by our inability to be able to gather during this time as by gathering we really make connections to support and help one another. On a personal note Judge Clark would like to thank everyone at mid-year conference in New Orleans, particularly those judges from Washington State and other states who were hit by COVID before us, you provided valuable information about what to do to prepare for the closing of the courts, and that information was passed on to the judges

in my jurisdiction and we fared much better by your advice. Once again, the sisterhood of this organization helped out those across the country. Thank you.

Annual Report from District 13 Honorable Pamela Washington

Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana Oregon and Washington

I. SUMMARY INTRODUCTION

The NAWJ 2019 Annual Conference was an awesome start of NAWJ year for District 13!! District 13 members, the Honorable Karen Donahue became NAWJ's President Elect; District 13 had 4 first time attendees at the conference. We were excited about moving NAWJ's goals and objectives forward! Three of District 13's leadership team attended the Mid-Year Conference in beautiful New Orleans and by conference end; we were at ground zero of a Coronavirus outbreak. Life changed for NAWJ and the rest of the world that weekend. In the midst of the pandemic, District 13 wanted to reach out to its members and stay connected as much as possible. We published two newsletters and started a District 13 online book club to encourage members to stay engaged. We collaborated with other districts, supported webinar programs, and supported NAWJ's transitions during Covid. This annual report highlights District 13's activities, achievements and acknowledges the outstanding contributions of District 13 members.

II. JUDICIAL OUTREACH

October 2019

Alaska Color of Justice: On October 3-4, 2019, the Alaska Court System hosted the *Color of Justice* program. Nearly 80 high school students from Anchorage area high schools attended the two days of workshops and other activities presented by law professors from Gonzaga University School of Law, Seattle University School of Law, and University of Washington School of Law. The program is also supported by the Alaska Bar Association and the Anchorage School District. Anchorage area students attended from Bartlett, East, and West high schools. The two-day program included "*MentorJet: A Speed Mentoring Experience*," "*Constitutional Cranium*," and three *Mock Trials*. NAWJ Member Judge Pamela Washington is the Anchorage Chair of Color of Justice and she serves with NAWJ members, Alaska Supreme Court Justice Susan Carney, and District Court Judges Kari McCrea and Jo-Ann Chung.

The 11th Annual Women's Conference at Mission Creek Corrections Center for Women was held Thursday, October 10th and Friday, October 11th. Judge Lisa Paglisotti and Judge Karen Donohue helped plan the two-day event in conjunction with the Washington State Department of

Corrections, The Gender and Justice Commission and veteran Success Inside and Out participant, Joyce Oswald. Ms. Oswald, an education professional in the State prison system, first worked with Justice Dana Fabe to present Success Inside & Out in Alaska. District 13 is fortunate to have her experience! Judge Laurel Gibson and Judge Janet Garrow moderated a panel of formerly incarcerated individual's. Judge Cathy Moore, Judge Marilyn Paja and Judge Lisa Paglisotti, along with several judicial friends of NAWJ participated in round table discussions with the offenders. Topics discussed at the round tables included Family Law Domestic Violence Protection Orders, Bench Warrant Quashes, Vacating Convictions and Restoring Civil Rights and Legal Financial Obligations.

The 12th Annual Success Inside & Out Conference in Anchorage at the Hiland Mountain Correctional Center was held October 26, 2019. NAWJ Members Judge JoAnn Chung, *Success* chair, Kari McCrea, and Pamela Washington were on the planning committee and participated in the 1-day event. The program included Passport to Success, the favorite Fashion Show, and breakout sessions on Child Custody, Probation, Resume writing, and a keynote address by Theresa Lyons, CEO of the Alaska YWCA on Emotional Intelligence. Alaska State Chair Josie Garton opened the program on behalf of the Alaska Court System and NAWJ. It was another exciting program thanks to the participation and support of over 30 community volunteers and judicial officers.

Supreme Court Live 2019 in Fairbanks Alaska. Around 450 local high school students had the chance to listen to oral arguments presented to the Alaska Supreme Court. The opportunity came from the Supreme Court Live program, in the state, that brings the Supreme Court to schools to help students better understand the judicial system and get to see it in action. The Alaska Supreme Court includes NAWJ Member and longtime resident of Fairbanks, Alaska, the Honorable Justice Susan Carney.

Diversity in Our Community: Stories Affecting Our Lives was held on November 5, 2019 at the Hotel Captain Cook, Anchorage, Alaska. NAWJ member and past president (Ret) Justice Dana Fabe moderated the panel discussion and NAWJ Member Kari McCrea was one of the panel guests. The lunch program is an annual program of the Anchorage Association of Lawyers, Alaska Supreme Court's Fairness Diversity & Equality Commission, Alaska Bar Association and the Anchorage Bar Association.

The 8th Annual Judicial Officer & Law Student Reception was held at Gonzaga University School of Law on November 15, 2019. Gonzaga Law Student Leah Wilborn Neese (2L) was the recipient of the Washington State NAWJ Scholarship. NAWJ members Judge Marilyn Paja, Judge Lisa Paglisotti, Chief Justice Debra Stevens, Justice Sheryl Gordon-McCloud and Judge Karen Donohue were present with many judicial friends of NAWJ from across Washington State. A second scholarship was presented by the Washington State Association for Justice.

Screening of the film PUSHOUT on November 22, 2019. Along with the Washington State Gender and Justice Commission, NAWJ co-sponsored the screening of the film PUSHOUT. This film addresses the criminalization of black girls in schools.

December 2019

Celebration for Retiring Chief Justice Mary Fairhurst. A reception was held at the Washington State Temple of Justice on December 18, 2019, to honor retiring Chief Justice (and NAWJ member) Mary Fairhurst. Justice Fairhurst retired after serving 17 years on the State Supreme Court, the last three as Chief Justice, to focus on her health and spend time with family and friends. She was diagnosed in November 2018 with a return of colon cancer that had first appeared in 2008.

March 2020

Voting, Leadership, and Women: Historical Insights and Contemporary Implications: The NAWJ in collaboration with Washington Women Lawyers, the Washington Supreme Court Gender and Justice Commission, and the Washington State Women's Commission, will be holding a half-day program covering topics related to the history of women's suffrage, current challenges with access to voting, and a historical perspective of women in leadership. Program planning committee includes NAWJ members Washington State Supreme Court Justice Sheryl Gordon, King County Superior Court Judge Karen Donohue, and Kitsap County District Court Judge Marilyn Paja.

NAWJ Mid-Year Meeting in New Orleans: Four District 13 Members attended the mid-year meeting in the beautiful New Orleans French Quarters. It was a bittersweet time of great fun and new concerns. Hugs were abandoned for elbow bumps and Covid was starting to dominate the headlines.

May 2020

The District 13 Book Club launched in the May Quarterly Newsletter. Members began reading Elaine Weiss' THE WOMAN HOUR. We hoped it would stir up interests in attending NAWJ 2020 Nashville Conference, a celebration of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, and a chance to meet and hear from author Elaine Weiss.

District 13 Court Response to the Pandemic Update: Most District 13 States suspended in-person proceedings statewide while remaining open to deal with emergency matters such as in-custody bail hearings and protective orders. Jury trials and non-emergency matters were suspended. Telephonic participation and electronic filing of all documents were encouraged or in some cases, required. States are re-opening and the courts are holding more matters. In Alaska, grand jury proceedings were expected to resume in June. Witnesses and interpreters are allowed to appear by videoconference or teleconference. As of May 2020, jury trials were still suspended in Alaska, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho.

June 2020

The District 13 Leadership team met to plan a meet & greet with the

membership and their guests to get to know each other and to introduce NAWJ and opportunities to get involved. The event is tentatively scheduled for late July.

Scholarship Fund: District 13 will be promoting an Annual District-wide Law Student Scholarship Award and will be soliciting donations. The team will be establishing Guidelines for all states to participate in promoting the award.

July 2020

The first Zoom Book Club meeting was held on Friday, July 10th. Five judges attended and it was a fun time! Over a dozen judges responded to the emails and could not attend due to conflicts but were very excited about participating. We will consider changing the meeting day and time. The discussion of *The Woman's Hours* was interesting and prompted a lot of discussion related to race and equity. Judge Karen Donahue made our second book selection, *The Water Dancer* by Ta'Nesih Coats. Next Meeting will be scheduled for late August.

August 2020

First Virtual *Color of Justice and MentorJet*. August 13th and 14th, the Alaska Native Justice Center (ANJC) held their first Color of Justice Program in partnership with Alaska Court System and NAWJ. Due to increased Covid-19 restrictions, registration was limited to 20 students to plan for social distancing. ANJC considered canceling the program because parents were concerned when Covid cases increased. Instead of canceling, ANJC decided to do the 2-day program virtually. Thirteen students participated with 5 NAWJ members and other volunteers. Terry Price, with the University of Washington School of Law engaged the students in a session entitled *Where Will Your Law Degree Take You?* Dr. Susan Lee with Gonzaga Law School presented a session on *Color Your Future* about planning for college. ANJC staff attorneys hosted a session on *Knowing Your Tribal Courts*. Alaska State Chair Jose Garton hosted *Constitutional Cranium* and District Director Pamela Washington hosted *You be the Judge* and participated in Mentor Jet.

A Conversation with Washington Supreme Court About Racial Justice:

On August 27th, the National Judicial College's panel A Conversation with Washington Supreme Court About Racial Justice featured NAWJ District 13 Members Chief Justice Debra L. Stephens, Justice G. Helen Whitener, Justice Montoya-Lewis and Justice Barbara Madsen. The panel addressed the following: Have courts played a role in perpetuating injustice? (Spoiler alert: yes!). What are key things that state court justice systems can do to respond to racial injustice and promote public trust and confidence?

October 2020

District 13 is co-sponsoring two Judicial Institute events designed to encourage diverse attorneys to join the bench. The first, entitled Pathways to the Bench will be held October 14, 2020 via zoom and will feature NAWJ members Chief Justice Debra Stephens and Judge Rebecca Pennell. The second event, entitled Bridging the Gavel Gap, will be held via zoom on October 15, 2020. The Judicial Institute is a nonprofit organization dedicated to diversifying Washington State's Judiciary. Every two years, they sponsor events for diverse legal professionals seeking a pathway to the bench.

III. UPCOMING EVENTS

The next book club will be November 10th. The book theme is "all things RBG." Read any book about RBG and come prepared to share about or beloved Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

IV. NOTABLE APPOINTMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

NAWJ MEMBER Justice Debra Stephens has been elected by her fellow members of the Washington Supreme Court to be chief justice. Stephens, 54, will replace current Chief Justice Mary Fairhurst who retired in January this year.

On December 6, 2019, Alaska Gov. Mike Dunleavy appointed NAWJ Member Bride Seifert to the Homer Superior Court. Seifert has lived in Alaska for 8 1/2 years and has practiced law for 10 years. She graduated in 2010 from William Mitchell College of Law in Minnesota. Judge Seifert began her NAWJ membership when she served an Administrative Law Judge. Prior to her appointment, Judge Seifert was an Assistant District Attorney in Kotzebue, Alaska.

NAWJ President, the Honorable Bernadette D'Souza appointed District 13 Director Judge Pamela Washington to the Advisory Council of the National Association of Court Management's "Courts in the Era of #WeToo" Education Initiative.

Judge Washington and NAWJ Members Justice Susan Carney, Judge Pamela Washington and Judge Kari McCrea serve as co-chairs of the Alaska Supreme Court's Fairness, Diversity, and Equality Commission and will be involved in drafting an action plan for eliminating racial inequities in the court.