

## **Investiture of Judge Latrice Westbrooks to be held Feb. 1 in Jackson**

January 31, 2017

An investiture ceremony for Court of Appeals Judge Latrice Westbrooks is scheduled for Feb. 1 at 3 p.m. at the Gartin Justice Building, 450 High Street in Jackson.



Judge Westbrooks, 44, of Lexington, took the oath of office on Jan. 3. It is traditional to hold a formal investiture ceremony later.

Rev. Reginald Buckley, pastor of Cade Chapel Baptist Church, will give the invocation. Leyser Q. Hayes will welcome and introduce guests. Dr. A. J. Stovall, chairman of the Division of Social Science at Rust College, will be the guest speaker. Judge James Graves of the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals will administer the ceremonial oath to Judge Westbrooks. Judge Westbrooks' grandmother, Frances Westbrooks, and her mother, Lucille Westbrooks Bennett, will assist with the enrobing.

Judge Westbrooks became the first African American woman assistant district attorney in the Second Circuit Court District in October 1997. She joined the Jackson law firm of Byrd and Associates in 2000, then opened her own law practice in 2001, representing clients in both criminal and civil matters. She served as prosecutor for the city of Durant and as city attorney for the town of Isola. For almost 10 years, she served as a public defender in Holmes County. In 2013, she became interim communications director for Jackson Mayor Chokwe Lumumba, then joined the Jackson City Attorney's office as legal counsel for the Jackson Police Department. She returned to private law practice in 2014. She served as Municipal Judge for the city of Lexington before she was elected to the Court of Appeals.

She has worked in conjunction with the Magnolia Bar Association, One Voice, the NAACP, the Mississippi Center for Justice, the Southern Poverty Law Center's Mississippi Youth Justice Project and the ACLU. She served as a Southeast Regional and Central Director of the Magnolia Bar Association. She previously chaired the Criminal Justice Committee for the State Conference of the NAACP. She is a member of the Mississippi Bar, Magnolia Bar Association, National Bar Association, the National Conference of Black Lawyers, the Capital Area Bar Association and the Metro Jackson Black Women Lawyers Association. She is a former member of the Mississippi Association for Justice and the Mississippi Public Defenders Association. She is a life member of the NAACP, past board member of Leadership Greater Jackson Alumnae, past board member of the I.S. Sanders YMCA, and past board member of the National African American Student Leadership Conference.

Judge Westbrooks was born in Memphis, Tennessee. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tenn. She earned a law degree from the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law.