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Senior Status Judge James Bell receives Chief Justice Award



Chief Justice Mike Randolph, at right, presents the Chief Justice Award to Senior Status Judge James Bell at the Mississippi Bar Convention on July 15.

Senior Status Judge James D. Bell is the recipient of the 2022 Chief Justice Award.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Mike Randolph presented the award on July 15 at the Mississippi Bar

Convention. The annual award recognizes individuals whose actions significantly impact the law, the administration of justice, and the people of the State of Mississippi.

Chief Justice Randolph selected Judge Bell in recognition of his efforts during the past two years to reduce the case backlog in Hinds County Court. Judge Bell's endeavors resulted in removing more than 103,000 cases from the dockets of the County Court of Hinds County.

The award reads, in part, that "as part of his service as Senior Status Judge, he, along with his staff of Deenie Miller, Isaac Ward, and Cameron Ghaffari, with indispensable assistance from Nathan

Evans, Director of Mississippi Electronic Courts, Lisa Counts, Deputy Director of the Administrative Office of Courts, and Zack Wallace, Hinds County Circuit Clerk, have conducted a meticulous, systematic review of thousands of case files, identifying active cases needing hearings, stale cases needing closure, and long since completed cases needing documentation." Such "tireless work exemplifies the spirit of public service."

Judge Bell is the longest currently serving Senior Status judge in the state. He began accepting Senior Status case appointments in 1989 after serving for six years as an

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Judge Gambrell Chambers receives Judicial Excellence Award



Bar President Blake Teller, at right, presents the Judicial Excellence Award to Judge Deborah Gambrell Chambers.

Chancellor Deborah J. Gambrell Chambers of Hattiesburg received the 2022 Judicial Excellence Award on July 15.

The award was presented during the annual business session at the Mississippi Bar Convention.

The Bar's Board of Commissioners established the Judicial Excellence Award to recognize judges who exceed the call of their judicial office. Recipients exemplify judicial excellence through leadership in advancing the quality and efficiency of justice and possess high ide-

als, character and integrity. Judge Gambrell Chambers received this honor for her outstanding leadership, efficiency in the field of jurisprudence and her character and integrity.

The Board of Bar Commissioners noted that Judge Gambrell Chambers has served with distinction for the past 11 years. Gov. Haley Barber appointed her as a Chancellor for the 10th Chancery Court District in 2011. She graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1972 with a Bachelor of

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Chancellor says leaving bench will allow time for other public service

Chancellor Deborah Gambrell Chambers will retire at the end of December.

It is a change of plans that came at the urging of her six daughters. She filed qualifying papers to run for re-election, but withdrew.

“I just want to direct my energies to do some other things. I’m still healthy. I can still travel,” said Judge Gambrell Chambers, who is 70.

Her daughters are

spread out all over the country: “one in every time zone,” she said.

She also has a list of public service projects which she wants to pursue. She has worked for several years with court reporters to create and support a court reporter training class that produced its first graduates in July. She wants to continue that work, including helping establish another court reporter training program in north Missis-

sippi.

She wants to work to provide scholarships for non-traditional students, having been one herself. Many of the recent court reporter graduates are non-traditional students who worked full-time or part-time jobs while taking classes.

She wants to teach parenting classes for parents in Youth Court. She knows a thing or two about parenting, having completed law school while raising children. Her topics might range from time management to preparing crockpot meals.

“I was a nontraditional student when I went to law school and it was hard,” she said. “I had



Deborah Gambrell Chambers
Chancery Judge

two small children and I commuted to Jackson to Mississippi College for three years. I learned to get babysitters at 5 a.m. and I graduated *cum laude*,” she said.

Chief Justice Award, *continued from page 1*

elected judge of the Hinds County Court. He has been appointed to serve as a Special Circuit Judge, Chancellor and County Judge in hundreds of cases in 40 counties all over the state. He currently presides over cases in County Court, Youth Court, Chancery Court, and Circuit Court in multiple counties.

Senior Status judges are retired judges who are willing to be appointed by the Supreme Court to preside over cases in which local judges have conflicts and have recused themselves. There are currently 66 Senior Status judges. The Mississippi Supreme Court made 302 special judge appointments in cases involving recusals during the 2022 fiscal year which ended June 30.

Judge Bell’s work to assist the trial courts of Hinds County stretches back to the time when he was an elected County Court Judge. The Circuit Judges of the Seventh Circuit Court appointed him

as a Special Circuit Judge to preside over Circuit Court cases.

Judge Bell is former chairman of the Conference of Senior Status Judges. He served on the Commission on Judicial Performance and as secretary to the Supreme Court Advisory Committee on Rules.

Judge Bell grew up in Jackson. He earned a Bachelor’s Degree in education from the University of Mississippi in 1975, and a Juris Doctor from the University of Mississippi School of Law in 1977. He opened a law practice in Jackson in 1977, and maintained that private practice except for his six years of elected judicial service. He moved his office to Crystal Springs earlier this year.

He has published two novels, *Maximilian’s Treasure* and *Vampire Defense*. He is a deacon at Pinelake Baptist Church and former president of the Jackson Rugby Club.

Judicial Excellence, *continued from page 1*

Science degree in political science. She earned her Juris Doctorate from Mississippi College School of Law in 1978.

Judge Gambrell Chambers is Senior Chancellor of the 10th Chancery, which includes Forrest, Lamar, Marion, Pearl River and Perry counties.

She spearheaded efforts to enhance courtroom safety and security measures in her district and realigned court staffing priorities to improve the efficiency of court operations and the administration of justice.

She has served on the Access to Justice Commission, the Committee on Professional Responsibility, and is a Mississippi Bar Foundation Fellow. She served as president of the South Central Bar As-

sociation in 2000, was inducted into the University of Southern Mississippi Hall of Fame in 2014, and served on USM’s Dubard School Advisory Board 2010-2011. She received the Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project’s Beacon of Justice Award in 2019 for her leadership in promoting and supporting equal access to justice. She has been a leader in organizing free legal clinics to assist the poor in the 10th Chancery District.

She has been an active member of the Mississippi Bar for 43 years. In 1978, she established the Gambrell Law Firm where she engaged in general practice for 31 years. She served as a Justice Court Judge for Forrest County from 1980-2011.

Court reporters graduate from inaugural PRCC program



Celebrating students' completion of court reporter training are, left to right, students Felicia Jackson and Alicia Miller, PRCC Vice President Dr. Jana Causey, veteran court reporter Twila Jordan-Hoover, Chancellor Deborah Gambrell Chambers, and students Jessie Anglin, Amanda Hernandez and Candace Cooley.

Five newly trained stenographic court reporters graduated from Pearl River Community College's inaugural program July 29.

During a ceremony at the Forrest County Chancery Courthouse, judges and educators emphasized the great need for the new graduates, and more like them. Fifteen students started the next class at PRCC's Hattiesburg campus a few days later.

Officers of the Mississippi Court Reporters Association hope to be able to start another training program in the northern part of the state. They are working to find a community college or university willing to add the program.

Director Randy Pierce of the Mississippi Judicial College told the graduates, "The court system will not work without you. We are at a critical point in our judicial system. There is a need that you will fill....You don't know how much the judicial branch

needs you, but you will soon find out."

PRCC Vice President Dr. Jana Causey told the graduates, "I want to thank you all for answering the call. You are the seed that is going to start this initiative." Dr. Causey told them that they will soon take on an important role. As they type every word of proceedings, "people's lives will always be in your fingertips."

Tenth District Chancellor Rhea Sheldon told the graduates, "You are the leaders of the court reporting program." Future students will look to them for advice.

Veteran court reporter Twila Jordan Hoover, who spearheaded efforts to form the program and taught and mentored the students, told them, "Be confident that you can and will become certified."

They completed the academic training. They have to get up to speed, literally. Certification requires that

a court reporter type 225 words per minute for questions and answers in testimony and depositions, 200 words per minute during a jury charge and 180 words per minute transcribing literary material.

They have plenty of opportunity for live practice in courtrooms. Chancellors and other judges welcome them to sit in on proceedings. Judge Sheldon promised a workout. "I talk very fast and I talk a lot and I don't take a lot of breaks."

Tenth District Chancellor Deborah Gambrell Chambers said the graduates are non-traditional students. Four out of five have children and jobs that they worked around to complete their studies. She thanked their families for their support and encouragement. "They could not do it without you," she said.

Graduates are Jessie Morgan Ponder Anglin of Mount Olive, Candace



Director Randy Pierce speaks to graduates.

Cooley of Waynesboro, Amanda Barnes Hernandez of Eatonville, Felicia Jackson of Hattiesburg and Alicia Miller of Magee.

Hernandez said Circuit Judge Jon Mark Weathers encouraged her to train to be a court reporter. She has worked for Forrest County as a custodian for seven years. Completing court reporter training "is an achievement. It is something that I've done for myself and also for my children," she said. She

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Guardianship clinic provides help in 13th Chancery Court



Chancellor David Shoemake questions a prospective guardian.



Chancellor Gerald Martin talks to an aunt seeking guardianship.

Forty-four people from across south central Mississippi recently received help with legal guardianships so that children can attend school and receive health care benefits.

Six local attorneys donated their time to help low-income people who applied for guardianships during the free Guardianship Clinic which was held on Aug. 26 in Mendenhall.

Services were offered to residents of Simpson, Smith, Lawrence, Jefferson Davis and Covington counties. Chancery clerks were at the clinic to file documents. Chancery District waived fees for

households with annual incomes less than \$24,000, and clerks or their deputies from the five counties were at the clinic to file documents.

Chancellor Gerald Mar-

New court reporters are non-traditional students seeking career changes

Continued from page 3

has three children, ages 18, 12 and 11.

Miller started court reporter training more than 17 years ago on the Gulf Coast. Hurricane Katrina struck, and the small class did not resume. She later worked as a sales associate for a cellular telephone service provider. She is now a stay-at-home mother raising three children, ages 12, 8 and 2.

Anglin earned a degree in business and marketing. She works at a pharmacy. In April, she returned from her honeymoon early to attend the Mississippi Court Reporters Spring Conference in Biloxi. "I look forward to a career that I love."

Jackson has a bachelor's degree in sociology and psychology. She has worked for 20 years at a chiropractor clinic. She

has three children. The oldest is 21.

Cooley is a deputy clerk in the Wayne County Tax Collector's office. She has two children, 13 and 9.

There is a shortage of certified court reporters, as retirements have outpaced new people coming into the profession. The average age of the court reporters in Mississippi is 55, and 25 percent of the court reporters are between 61 and 70 years old. There are 282 licensed court reporters, including 21 who live in surrounding states and have nonresident temporary licenses, said Tracy Graves, Administrator of the Mississippi Board of Certified Court Reporters. There were 375 licensed court reporters more than 10 years ago. That includes official court reporters for all federal and state courts as well as free-



Chancellor Rhea Sheldon congratulates court reporter grads

lance court reporters.

Leaders of the Mississippi Court Reporters Association set plans in motion for a training program. Jordan-Hoover and Judge Gambrell pitched the program to PRCC officials.

Dr. Causey said, "We are a community college and we react to our local

economic needs."

PRCC agreed to offer classes, becoming the only college program in the state to train court reporters. Classes began in August 2021 at the Hattiesburg campus.



Above, left to right, Deputy Chancery Clerks Debbie Burch of Smith County, Jeana Humphrey of Covington County, Elizabeth Turnage of Lawrence County and Chancery Clerk Charlene Fairley of Jefferson Davis County came to Simpson County Chancery Court in Mendenhall on Aug. 26 to file documents for people seeking guardianships. At left, Simpson County Deputy Chancery Clerk Dionne McKinney files guardianship documents in her office during the guardianship clinic.

tin said, “It’s to help take care of the children.”

Attorney Wesley Broadhead of Mendenhall said, “Simpson County has a good many under-served citizens. A lot of grandparents are now raising their grandchildren with little or no help from the parents. This clinic allows the guardians legal assistance to have the children educated in the public school system.”

Attorney Wesla Sullivan of Mendenhall sees the needs of children in her work as Jefferson Davis County Youth Court Ref-

eree and as School Board attorney for Simpson County. “I see the need for guardianships to help place these children in stable homes and better environments to better their well-being and education,” Sullivan said.

The clinic saw grandparents, aunts and uncles, great aunts, cousins and other family members who had taken in children whose parents were deceased, absent or unable to take care of them. The children ranged from babies to teenagers.

A young woman seek-

ing guardianship of two of her teenage cousins explained their circumstances in a hearing before Chancellor David Shoemaker. She and her family have cared for the children for the past three years. One of the children has a severe medical condition that requires weekly visits to specialists in Jackson.

“We love them,” she told Judge Shoemaker. Outside the courthouse, with legal paperwork in hand, she said, “It’s a happy ending to a very sad, traumatic thing. It’s an answered prayer.”

She’s paying forward the help she received years ago. “I’ve been a foster child myself. The ones that did step up, they didn’t have to do what they did. They did it out of love.”

The Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers Project and the Thirteenth Chancery Court organized and staffed the clinic. Private practice attorneys who donated their time were Wesley Broadhead, Marc McMillian, Tracey Seghini, Wesla Sullivan and Wade Underwood from Simpson County and attorney Albert Turnage from Lawrence County. Simpson County Circuit Clerk Witt Fortenberry, who is an attorney, assisted. Two representatives of Young Williams, which handles child support services, also were on hand to research records of child support orders.

Judge Martin said, “We had a majority of the Simpson County Bar” show up to help at the clinic. “Our local bar is community minded and willing to help those who can’t afford an attorney. That’s small town law practice.”

Turnage, of Monticello, said, “It’s just a way to help people who can’t afford an attorney. All small town attorneys do this. It’s just a way to give back.”

MVLP Executive Director Gayla Carpenter-Sanders said, “Friday’s clinic is an example of how lives can be changed when community comes together. We had our judges, court staff, local attorneys, school district and state and community agencies come together to provide stable, loving home environments for our children.”

Four special judges appointed to assist Hinds Circuit Court



Judge Andrew K. Howorth

Mississippi Supreme Court Chief Justice Mike Randolph has appointed four special judges to assist the Hinds County Circuit Court in reducing the number of pending cases caused by the pandemic.

The special Judges are Andrew K. Howorth of Oxford, Betty W. Sanders of Greenwood, Stephen B. Simpson of Gulfport and Frank G. Vollar of Vicksburg.

“Chief Justice Randolph’s appointments respond to the urgent need to reduce the criminal case backlog in Hinds County,” said Greg Snowden, Director of the Administrative Office of Courts. “The Courts remained open throughout the worst of the pandemic, but crime didn’t take a holiday. Trials were postponed and dockets became congested. The Legislature has provided coronavirus relief funds to assist the Courts, the prosecutors and public defenders, Capital Police, and various other agencies in order to ameliorate the damage caused or exacerbated by COVID,” Snowden said.

The elected Hinds County Circuit Judges



Judge Betty W. Sanders

maintain active dockets, and they will continue to bring cases to trial or other final disposition. The special judges appointed by the Chief Justice will concentrate on felony criminal cases that are part of the burgeoning regular dockets.

“Accused people have a right to their day in court, whether they are incarcerated pending trial or out on bond” Director Snowden noted. “If defendants are found guilty, they need to be sent to prison, but if they are found not guilty, they need to be released. Justice is served only when a final determination is made, one way or the other.”

Director Snowden commended the many public officials involved in the effort. “The sitting Hinds County Circuit Judges, the District Attorney’s office and the Public Defender’s office all have come together with the AOC to agree on an action plan, and the Circuit Clerk, the Sheriff and the Board of Supervisors will ensure courtroom facilities are available and secure. And, of course, the appointed special judges deserve



Judge Stephen B. Simpson

thanks for agreeing to accept their appointments.”

Judge Howorth served for eighteen and one-half years on the Third Circuit Court of Benton, Calhoun, Chickasaw, Lafayette, Marshall, Tippah and Union counties. He retired June 30, 2020. He is former chairman of the Conference of Circuit Judges and served on the Board of Governors of the Mississippi Judicial College. He is a former member of the State Intervention Courts Advisory Committee.

Judge Sanders retired in December 2014 after 25 years of judicial service. She served for 20 years as a Circuit Judge of the 4th Circuit District of Leflore, Sunflower and Washington counties. She previously served for five years by appointment as a special magistrate hearing cases filed by prisoners at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman. She is former chairman of the Conference of Circuit Judges. She served on the State Intervention Courts Advisory Committee and was president of the Mississippi Association of Drug Court Professionals. She served on the Missis-



Judge Frank G. Vollar

issippi Volunteer Lawyers Project Board of Directors and on the Mississippi Commission on Judicial Performance, the Ethics Committee of the Mississippi Bar and the Bar Complaint Tribunal.

Judge Simpson was a circuit judge of the Second Circuit District for eight years. He is former chairman of the Conference of Circuit Judges. The Governor appointed him Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety in May 2008. He served for almost three years. Before he took the bench, he served for seven and one-half years as an assistant district attorney in the Second Circuit, which includes Hancock, Harrison and Stone counties. He is former president of the Mississippi Prosecutors Association.

Judge Vollar served for 20 years as a circuit judge of the Ninth Judicial District of Issaquena, Sharkey and Warren counties. He retired from the bench on May 31, 2009, to return to the private practice of law. He was county prosecutor in Warren County for five and a half years before he took the bench.

Judge Lillie Sanders withdraws re-election bid, will retire at term end



Judge Lillie Sanders

Circuit Judge Lillie Blackmon Sanders will retire Jan. 1 after 29 years of service. She had been unopposed for re-election, but withdrew in July because of health issues. She is recovering.

"I've had a series of health issues that started after the qualifying deadline," she said. "Right now I'm doing OK."

Judge Sanders became the first African-American woman to serve on the state trial bench in February 1989, when former Gov. Ray Mabus appointed her to an unexpired term in the Sixth Circuit District. She was elected to the circuit bench in 1994. The Sixth Circuit includes Adams, Amite, Franklin and Wilkinson counties. She also is a former municipal judge and youth court public defender.

Looking back over her service, she said, "I have brought fairness and diversity to the court. I think I have some insight into doing things a little bit different than the same old way."

"I treated everybody as a person. You may have been a person who committed a crime, but you are

a person," she said. She addresses defendants as "Mr." and "Ms." Some are upset already. "I didn't pour gasoline in a burn site," she said. "When you correct someone from the bench, you do it. You don't have to do it harshly. You can do it humanely." It is advice she took from an older judge a long time ago. "Just because you have the power to do something, doesn't mean that you do it. Don't spend your time trying to get immediate revenge. I just move right along. I took that advice a long time ago and it served me well."

She started a drug intervention court in May 2004. "I love my drug court and the contributions I've made to that, getting it started, trying to keep it

running and how it's performing at this time."

"I am a big proponent of alternative sentencing. Not that judges are social workers, but we need to do something to try to save jail space....I think that jail should be there for real criminals like murders, kidnappers or sexual predators."

She would like to see more efforts toward expanding education opportunities in prisons "so that when people get out of jail, they have some kind of skills." She also hopes to see further development of reentry programs to assist people after they are released from prison.

In retirement, she wants to do expungement clinics. "They are working for minimum wage. They don't have the funds for

someone to do an expungement for them. They can't get a job because of this," she said.

She spent her early legal career working with the poor. She worked at the former Southwest Mississippi Legal Services in Natchez, and was a staff attorney of the Department of Human Services. She was named Pro Bono Lawyer of the year in 1994, and received the Magnolia Bar Association's Government Service Award.

She serves on the Access to Justice Commission and previously served on the Judicial Advisory Study Committee.

She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Alcorn State University and a Juris Doctor from the University of Mississippi School of Law.

Judge Mozingo will leave Circuit bench Dec. 31



Judge Anthony Mozingo speaks at Oct. 4 press conference.

Circuit Judge Anthony Mozingo announced that he will retire from the 15th Circuit Court bench on Dec. 31 to become the new executive director of Homes of Hope for Children, Inc. on Jan. 1, 2023.

Judge Mozingo had been unopposed for reelec-

tion to the Post 1 position of the 15th District.

Judge Mozingo announced his plans Oct. 4. The move came several weeks after the founder and former director of Homes of Hope was arrested on criminal charges and removed from the di-

rectorship.

Judge Mozingo, 60, has served on the Circuit Court bench for 12 years. He said in a joint statement with Homes of Hope, "The time has come for me to step down and allow another to assume the bench as circuit judge. I am resolved and at peace in my decision to accept the position of executive director of Homes of Hope, a mission where less-fortunate children are loved and nurtured in a Christian environment."

Judge Mozingo said in the statement the he and his family have supported Homes of Hope since its inception. "Homes of Hope needs strong leader-

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Judge Green celebrates birthday and upcoming retirement



Circuit Judge Margaret Carey-McCray, at left, shares a moment with Judge Tomie T. Green at retirement ceremony.

Friends and family gathered on Circuit Judge Tomie Green's 70th birthday to celebrate her 24 years of service to the Hinds County Circuit Court. Judge Green will retire from the bench at the end of December.

"I am not going to stop working. I am just going to move to another venue," Judge Green told the crowd in her courtroom on Sept. 29. She hasn't decided what that will be.

The crowd included family, friends from church, high school and college, judges and lawyers. Her children, Synarus Green and Dr. Nikisha Ware, gave her a portrait painted by artist Sabrina Howard of Jackson. Her

former law clerks gave her an engraved plaque.

Attorney Andrea Barnes, speaking for the former law clerks, said Judge Green seized each teachable moment. "Judge's life depicts her commitment to training the next generation of leaders of lawyers, of judges, of scholars, of advocates, of policy makers."

Younger brother Larry Turner of Nashville, a retired forensic scientist, admired her as career adviser and mentor. He recalled the speech she gave as Miss Jim Hill High School. "I was in the eighth grade. I said one day I want to speak just like that, pronounce the words correctly, look

straight ahead and show confidence.... Whatever I accomplished, I owe it all to you because you were my road map."

Judge Green said, "I thank God for all the people whose lives I have touched. John Lewis said the only thing that makes life worth living is the impact you have on others."

Judge Green is the eldest of four siblings. She grew up in Jackson's Washington Addition. Her father was a painter. Her mother was a school cafeteria cook. She entered Tougaloo College at 16 and graduated, *magna cum laude*, at 19. She earned a Master of Science Degree at Jackson State University and a Juris Doctorate from Mississippi College School of Law.

She said that after she finished law school, she couldn't find work at a law firm. Attorney Jessie Evans offered her shared space and staff at his law office to start her practice. Then U.S. District Judge Henry T. Wingate offered her a clerkship. "There had never been a Black law clerk in the state of Mississippi in the federal government," she said. "I thank him for teaching me to be a judge."

"I didn't get into politics until late," she said. Congressman Bennie Thompson encouraged her to run for the Legislature when he was a Hinds County Supervisor. "I didn't want to have any part of politics," she said. Thompson took her on a drive around poverty stricken neighborhoods. It opened her eyes. She ran for and was elected to the Mississippi

House of Representatives, serving 1992-1999.

She was the first woman elected to the Hinds Circuit Court. She recalled the mentorship and support of the late Circuit Judge L. Breland Hilburn, Judge James Graves of the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, who served alongside her on the Hinds Circuit bench, and Ninth District Circuit Judge Isadore Patrick of Vicksburg.

She thanked her staff, especially Court Administrator Frances Ashley, who has worked with her since she took office. Ashley's name should be synonymous with "court administrator," as she assisted and shared the burdens. "Every judge needs a Frances."

She left the crowd with some words of wisdom.

"Judges are not gods, 'g-o-d-s.' We are, however, guards, 'g-u-a-r-d-s,' guardians of truth, guardians of justice, guardians of mercy, guardians of honor, guardians of the poor and downtrodden."

"If you are elected or appointed as a public servant, don't forget there is a difference between being a politician and a public servant. A politician is always preparing for the next election. They say just what needs to be said to get elected. But a public servant is always preparing for the next generation."

"Never sell your soul to the devil. The cost to buy it back will always, always be too much for you to pay."

How does she hope to be remembered? When someone hears her name, she hopes that they will smile.

Judge Mozingo to retire, *continued from Page 7*

ship and a plan for a stable, healthy future, and I intend to work on behalf of its board of directors and benefactors to pursue that stable future and lead it to greater things. My goal is to see Homes of Hope show that true charity – that is, love in action – can

change lives in this troubled world," Judge Mozingo said. "At this time in my life, I am convinced that the challenge of sustaining and growing the great investment of so many good people for nothing more than the children is what I must do."

19th Circuit Intervention Court celebrates graduation



Circuit Judge Robert Krebs presides over Sept. 6 graduation.

“Mommy!” a child exclaimed excitedly from the audience as intervention court graduates filed into Jackson County Circuit Court on the morning of Sept. 6 in Pascagoula.

Family and friends, court staff and visitors gathered to celebrate their graduation from the Nineteenth Judicial District Intervention Court. The longest time spent in the program was four years.

The graduates’ accomplishments included staying drug-free, keeping full-time jobs and earning professional licenses, vocational certificates and college degrees. At a more personal level, the graduates regained the trust of the families who stood by them. They regained custody of children. One who earned a real estate license is the mother of an 18-month-old boy born drug-free. And a father who graduated from the program held his seven-week-old son.

The babies didn’t fuss as family members and friends took turns holding them. They had no idea of how their parents’ partici-

pation in Intervention Court changed their future prospects for healthy lives.

During the past 16 years, 928 drug-free babies have been born to female intervention court participants statewide, Circuit Judge Robert P. Krebs told the graduation audience. A Bureau of Justice Statistics study estimates that each healthy, drug-free infant saves the state an average of \$750,000 during the first 18 years of life. The estimate assumes that without the care provided by intervention courts, drug addicted mothers would have given birth to babies with health issues that would require long-term medical care. Those 928 drug-free babies represent \$696 million in savings.

But more than the money, “saving 928 babies’ lives is a big deal,” Judge Krebs said.

“Drug Court has been a blessing for me,” a 31-year-old graduate told the crowd. He recalled becoming hooked on drugs at age 14, and using methamphetamine at 15. “I spent most of my life in jail,” he said.

“I’ve been in nine different rehabs.” Supervision of the Intervention Court made him stick with rehabilitation.

Two of the graduates are U.S. Marine veterans. Judge Krebs created a program especially tailored to the needs of military veterans in 2011. Both of the veteran program graduates are trained as mentors and will assist other military veterans enrolled in the 19th Judicial District Intervention Court, said Katherine Parker, coordinator for the intervention court.

“The Marine Corps teaches you to be self-reliant,” said a 48-year-old man who served two deployments in Africa and the Middle East. Asking for help wasn’t part of his mentality. He worked off shore overseas for 18 years after leaving the Marines. His life started into a downward spiral when he came home. He landed in Intervention Court. “It put me back in touch with the V.A. and taught me to ask for help,” he said. The intervention court connected him to Veterans Administration services that he didn’t know about.

Intervention Court staff produced a video of all the graduates talking about their struggles and accomplishments. One by one, they talked about where they were and where they are now. Chaos, misery and despair were some of their oft-repeated descriptions of their past.

One woman said that life before consisted of “living for my next high.” She has her family back. “I’m able to take care of my kids myself.”

Another graduate is working toward earning a bachelor’s degree in social work. “My objective is to help others with some of the things I struggled with,” he said, recalling that his wife and kids left due to his drug addiction.

Judge Krebs said that the graduation ceremony will be his last. He will retire in December after 20 years on the bench. He began supervising an intervention court in 2004. “For 18 years, I’ll tell you that drug court works,” he said.

The nine participants who graduated on Sept. 6 have paid a total of \$22,497 in fines and restitution plus \$14,310 in fees, Judge Krebs said. They did 1,800 hours of community service work; each must perform 200 hours of community service to graduate. By remaining out of prison and supporting themselves, they saved taxpayers \$529,410 in avoided incarceration costs.

Statewide, intervention courts have produced a savings of more than a billion dollars for taxpayers since detailed data began to be kept in FY 2006. That includes avoided health care costs for drug-free babies and avoided incarceration costs for intervention court participants. Avoided incarceration costs exceed \$823 million statewide between FY 2006 and FY 2022. Adult intervention court participants statewide paid more than \$17 million in fines from FY 2006 through FY 2022. In that time, more than 9,400 participants graduated. More than 3,500 people are currently enrolled.

Meet most recent additions to Administrative Office of Courts



Emiko Hemleben



Deenie Miller



Joetta Brashear



Rodger Wasson



Katie Mitchell



Calvin Jones

Four new staff members joined the Administrative Office of Courts in 2022.

Emiko Hemleben became Youth Court Programs Director for AOC in September. Deenie Miller became Language Access Coordinator in July.

Recent additions to the Intervention Court team include Joetta Brashear, who became Adult and Veteran Intervention Courts Legal Operations Analyst in August, and Rodger Wasson, Mental Health Treatment Courts Operations Analyst since June.

Team members who joined AOC more than a year ago are Calvin Jones,

Intervention Courts Financial Analyst since February 2021, and Katie Mitchell, Youth and Family Drug Intervention Courts operations analyst since October 2021.

Hemleben serves as the Court Improvement Program grant manager and oversees reimbursements of legislative appropriations to local youth courts.

Hemleben was an attorney in the Technical Assistance Division at the Office of the State Auditor for two years. She served as a Special Assistant Attorney General 2013-2020, working in the Attorney General's Opinions Division and the Bureau of

Victim Assistance. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Mississippi State University and Juris Doctor, *cum laude*, from the University of Mississippi School of Law.

Miller is AOC's first full-time Language Access Coordinator. She assists the courts in meeting the needs of people of limited English proficiency (LEP). She is in charge of educating judges, court staff and attorneys about requirements for providing court interpreters for people of limited English proficiency as well as recruiting more foreign language interpreters. She is responsible for court interpreter training and certification and ensuring the Mississippi State Judiciary is in compliance with federal rules and regulations regarding court interpreters.

Miller earned her paralegal certification from Millsaps College in 2000. She has worked in the legal profession for 22 years, the past 10 for attorney and Senior Status Judge James D. Bell.

Brashear is responsible for recertification for

adult drug intervention courts, a process which will begin in June 2023. She also will train court personnel and oversee expansion of the Case-WorX program.

Brashear earned a Master of Business Administration from Belhaven University and a Juris Doctor from Mississippi College School of Law. She worked at the veterans legal aid clinic as a law student. She also worked as a Medicaid staffing supervisor for five years.

Wasson will work closely with trial courts which will soon implement mental health treatment courts. He is focused on developing mental health treatment court standards, necessary documentation for court operations and creation of the mental health treatment courts programmatic report.

Wasson previously worked for 13 years with Region 8 Mental Health, the most recent four years as co-occurring disorder specialist. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a Master of Science in counseling psychology from Mississippi

Language access: Justice Court forms translated into Spanish

The Administrative Office of Courts' recently worked with the Mississippi Judicial College to get more than 50 Justice Court civil forms translated to Spanish.

Forms in Spanish went live on the Judicial College website on Sept. 14 at this link: <https://olemiss.app.box.com/s/fdbi69oh1pbux4tjirjmc0re2qotkrb>.

New AOC Language Access Coordinator Deenie Miller picked the translation project as a starting point. She hopes to address some of the forms used in other courts.

The Mississippi Access to Justice Commission funded the project. "This is going to expand the ability for non-English speakers to have access to the Justice Courts," said Access to Justice Commission Executive Director Nicole McLaughlin. "We are overjoyed and excited

about the new language access coordinator and the impact this will have on access to justice for those who don't speak English."

Data from the National Center for Immigration Studies shows that from 1980 to 2018, the population of people who speak a language other than English at home grew by 140 percent in Mississippi. Miller said that 3.8 percent of Mississippi's population is people of limited English proficiency; 2.6 percent of the population speak Spanish.

Miller said, "When a person of limited English proficiency is involved in a legal proceeding, it is imperative that they be provided a qualified court interpreter. A court interpreter is not only for an LEP to understand the proceedings, but also so a judge can effectively administer justice."

AOC provides all state

courts with a roster of foreign language interpreters who have demonstrated proficiency in interpretation of court proceedings. There currently are 25 credentialed interpreters — 22 Spanish speakers and one each for Arabic, Mandarin Chinese and Portuguese.

AOC seeks to recruit more foreign language interpreters. An Ethics and Skill Building Seminar will be held Nov. 2-4 at the Gartin Justice Building in Jackson. The seminar will introduce bilingual speakers to requirements for court interpreting. The registration deadline is Oct. 24. The registration form is at this link: <https://www.courts.ms.gov/aoc/courtinterpreter/forms/2022Registration%20Form.pdf>.

Participation in the court foreign language interpreter seminar is the first step in the program

which will test individuals who wish to serve as interpreters in Mississippi courtrooms. Candidates who want to be added to the court interpreters roster must already be fluent in English and a second language, and must develop an understanding of court proceedings and advanced legal terminology. The seminar will provide an introduction to court proceedings. The program will introduce participants to the role of the court language interpreter, ethical requirements, modes of interpretation and credentialing requirements.

Miller said that she hopes to be able to record the November training sessions and create an online training program in the future. "Having training available online will open the door to more interpreters who may not be able to attend an in-person seminar," she said.

AOC introduces new staff, *continued from page 10*

State University.

Mitchell is Operations Analyst for Youth and Family Drug Intervention Courts. She previously worked as coordinator for the Rankin County Youth and Family Drug Intervention Court for more than four years. She serves on the juvenile drug treatment court project advisory board of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals/ National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

Mitchell has extensive experience in therapeutic treatment, recovery, case management, court opera-

tions and compliance as well as financial, grant writing and grant administration expertise. She is a member of the AOC case management selection team contributing to the customization and launch of CaseWorx.

She previously worked at Region 8 Mental Health as outpatient therapist, youth drug court therapist, assistant alcohol and drug services director and director of the alcohol and drug services program. In Texas, she worked at a residential treatment facility and was director of a nonprofit family resource

center.

Mitchell earned a Bachelor of Science degree in human development and family studies with a minor in substance abuse studies from Texas Tech University and a Master of Science degree in marriage and family therapy from the University of Southern Mississippi. Her Mississippi licenses and certifications include marriage and family therapist, certified addiction counselor, GAIN certified administrator and EMDR trained therapist. She was a licensed chemical dependency counselor in

Texas.

Jones is an experienced financial accounting and auditing professional, having worked at the Mississippi Department of Mental Health for 22 years. He most recently conducted audits and related financial reviews of MDMH grants and Medicaid sub-grant recipients. He was on site for financial reviews of 15 regional DMH centers, more than 80 non-profit agencies and several state agencies. Jones earned a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from Mississippi College.

Themis Law Camp introduces students to careers in law



Students and lawyers participating in the Themis Law Camp gather for a picture with organizer Judge Jacqueline Mask, at center.

Trial and appellate judges and the Lee County Bar Association hosted a summer program for high school students interested in careers in law. The Themis Law Camp was held July 18-21 at the Lee County Justice Center in Tupelo.

Chancellor Jacqueline Mask, co-chair of the Access to Justice Commission, said the 23 students who participated were excited and energetic. She urged other courts to consider putting on a similar program.

“The overall goal is to get them involved and interested in the law, and to cultivate and grow that interest,” she said. The students were particularly interested in aspects of criminal law.

“You fall in love with the practice of law all over again,” she said.

Court of Appeals Chief Judge Donna Barnes of Tupelo said the law camp was “an excellent opportunity for students to observe the court system first-hand. Hopefully, this experience will prompt numerous students to consider law as a profession.”

Aaron Spearman, president of the Lee County Bar Association, presented two \$500 scholarships to participants at the end of camp. Scholarships were awarded to Sergio Garcia and Amy Priest. The scholarships were funded by participants’ fees and named in honor of Chancellor Mask.

Encouraging young people to consider careers in law is important to providing access to the courts for all people, particularly those who have limited financial means, said Nicole H. McLaughlin of



Sergio Garcia

Tupelo, executive director of the Mississippi Access to Justice Commission and director of the Access to Justice Initiative of the Mississippi Bar. In recent years the numbers of people who struggle to afford legal assistance has grown as the numbers of attorneys declined. McLaughlin said that from 2018 to 2022, the number of active



Amy Priest

practicing attorneys in Mississippi declined from 6,981 to 6,797 – a decrease of 184 people.

McLaughlin said, “We are seeing fewer young attorneys stay in Mississippi and fewer move to our rural areas. This is revealing a huge problem in Mississippi and will lead to a large access to justice issue.”

Court appoints eight to Access to Justice Commission



Members of the Access to Justice Commission gathered for a group photo during a quarterly meeting on Aug. 23 in Jackson.



Judge Sharon Sigalas

Retired Jackson County Youth Court Judge Sharon Sigalas of Gautier and Assistant U.S. Attorney Kimberly McCray Hampton of Oxford were recently appointed to the Access to Justice Commission.

The Mississippi Supreme Court also reappointed six veteran members: Chancellor Jacqueline Mask of Tupelo and attorney Rodger Wilder of



Kimberly Hampton

Gulfport, Commission co-chairs, and Supreme Court Justice Dawn Beam of Sumrall, Court of Appeals Presiding Judge Virginia C. Carlton of Jackson, Chancellor Deborah Gambrell Chambers of Hattiesburg and attorney Ammie T. Nguyen of Jackson.

Appointees' three-year terms will end June 30, 2025.

Judge Sigalas retired

from the bench on May 27 after more than 19 years as a Youth Court Judge in Jackson County. She founded the Jackson County Juvenile Drug Intervention Court in 2008. She was appointed by the Supreme Court to the state Intervention Courts Advisory Committee in November 2018, and served until shortly before her retirement. She earned her Juris Doctor from the University of Mississippi School of Law.

Hampton has served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Mississippi for almost four years. She previously worked for four and a half years as a state assistant district attorney in the Delta, and for a year as a staff attorney for the Mississippi Department of Human Services. She received her Juris Doctor degree from the University of Missis-

issippi School of Law, where she served as president of the Black Law Students Association, a member of the Dean's Leadership Council and a member of the Trial Advocacy Board. As a law student, she served as a law clerk for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in Memphis. Before law school, she served as an assistant teacher through the AmeriCorps program, assisting with the education of incarcerated youth at the Washington County Juvenile Detention Center. She also worked with the Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights. She recently served as chair of the Mississippi Bar Young Lawyers Division Diversity and Social Justice Committee. She serves as a member of the Ethics Committee of the Mississippi Bar.

Court on the Road program returns to college campuses in fall



Left to right, Judge Joel Smith, Judge Jim M. Greenlee and Judge Deborah McDonald listen to an oral argument at the University of Mississippi School of Law on Sept. 28.



Judge Deborah McDonald visits at a reception.



Judge Jim M. Greenlee, at center, answers questions from students.

The Mississippi Court of Appeals will convene on four college campuses in September, October and November.

Three-judge panels of the Court of Appeals heard oral arguments on Sept. 28 at the University of Mississippi School of Law. Oral arguments are set for Oct. 19 at Alcorn State University, Nov. 9 at Mississippi State University and Nov. 15 at Rust College.

The Court on the Road program cranked up for the first time since early 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic halted travel. The Court on the Road program schedules oral arguments on college campuses and occasionally at other locations as a teaching tool to give students and the public opportunities to watch proceedings in cases on appeal. Court on the Road offers a unique learning experience for students with an inter-

est in law, government, journalism and a variety of other fields. The general public may attend to gain a better understanding of appellate court proceedings.

Court of Appeals Chief Judge Donna Barnes of Tupelo said, “Our court is fortunate that statutes permit us to convene in places other than the Capital. That allows anyone, especially school groups, to attend in person and see first-hand how the system

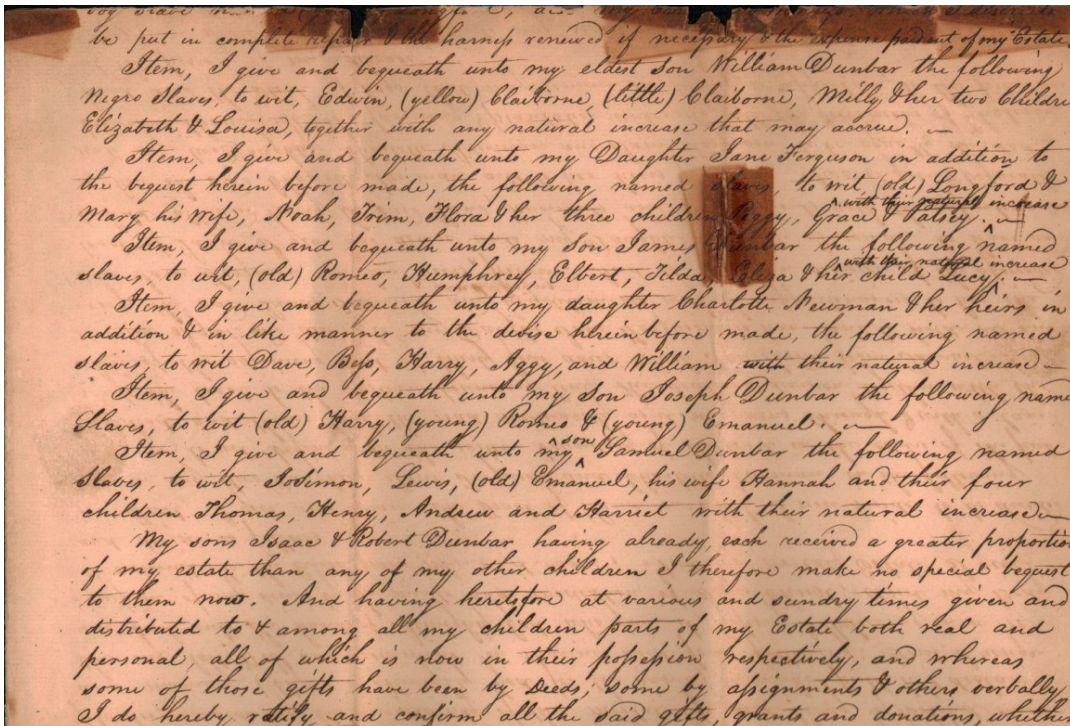
works.”

“We are especially glad to sit at Oxford at the law school as we know many of the students will one day appear before us. This will give them a preview so that they can prepare,” Chief Judge Barnes said. She noted that seven of the 10 Court of Appeals judges earned at least one of their degrees from the University of Mississippi.

The University of Mississippi School of Law hosted a reception for law students and the judges on Sept. 27, and judges spoke to an undergraduate government class later that evening. Before the panel convened on Sept. 28, the judges spent the morning visiting area high schools. Judges spoke to government classes at Oxford High School and Lafayette High School.

Court of Appeals Judge Jim M. Greenlee of Oxford, who helped coordinate the visit to his hometown, said, “Court on the Road allows the Court of Appeals to visit different areas of the state. We appreciate the Ole Miss Law School’s hosting of our visit and supporting the Court’s hearing of oral arguments in two cases on appeal. Holding arguments at the Law School allows the law students, the University and the community to experience our system of justice in action. We thank the Law School, the University, and the two high schools, Lafayette and Oxford, for allowing this compelling interaction of the Court with our citizens.”

The Lantern Project makes available records of enslaved people



The 1826 will of an Adams County planter lists enslaved persons by name as the planter willed ownership of individuals and families to his sons and daughters.



Jennifer McGillan talks with former Mississippi College School of Law Dean Jim Rosenblatt after a presentation.

Court records from the 1800s are seeing the light of day – and a digital scanner – as the Lantern Project works to make records of enslaved people accessible to the public.

“The goal is access,” said Jennifer McGillan, coordinator of manuscripts for Mississippi State University Libraries and leader of the project.

The U.S. Census did not

list the names of formerly enslaved persons until 1870, making tracking family histories more difficult. The Lantern Project has identified and scanned documents naming enslaved persons in probate records, deeds, civil and criminal court records, plantation records, receipts, bills of sale and other documents from the early 1800s through 1865.

In an Oct. 4 presentation sponsored by the Mississippi Law Library, McGillan displayed images of wills, estates and other legal papers, handwritten in scribbles and precise, flowing script on pages yellowed and fading, some creased and crumbling. The originals are in library collections and old court files around the state, accessible mostly to those with the means to travel to a courthouse and dig for information. The project will provide online access to a text-searchable, indexed collection containing digital images of original documents.

“We have a lot of patrons who are trying to research their slave ancestors,” McGillan said. “They describe it as being sold into darkness or disappearing into darkness, never to be heard from again. This is our attempt to turn on the lights.”

Estate inventories and appraisals, for instance, list enslaved persons by name along with land, buildings, livestock, furniture and other property. Those inventories sometimes included age, family information, such as “son of” or “daughter of,” and special skills such as blacksmith or tanner. Wills from the 1800s include names of enslaved persons as ownership passed from the deceased to others, enabling a researcher to possibly track people.

Lantern Project participants are Mississippi State University, the University of Mississippi, Delta State University, the Columbus-Lowndes Public Library, the Historic Natchez Foundation and the Montgomery County Archives in Montgomery, Ala. The project is funded by a \$340,000 grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission of the United States National Archives and Records Administration. The grant will end in December.

The Lantern Project includes records from participating library collections and records from Adams County, Lowndes County, Washington County and a few other counties, mostly across north Mississippi, and Alabama’s Montgomery County. Other counties have expressed interest.

“It’s not everything. We wish we could do more but we have our limits,” McGillan said.

For more information about the Lantern Project, go to this website: <https://www.lanternproject.msstat.edu/>.

Judge Henry Ross appointed to vacancy on 5th Circuit trial court



Circuit Judge Joseph Loper, at left, swears in Circuit Judge Henry Ross on June 6 at the Webster County Courthouse.

Circuit Judge Henry Ross of Eupora was sworn in on June 6 to serve as a state trial court judge of the Fifth Circuit Court.

Gov. Tate Reeves appointed Judge Ross, 65, to the vacancy created by the April 19 death of Circuit Judge George M. Mitchell Jr. of Eupora.

Judge Ross's term will expire on Jan. 2, 2023.

Judge Ross is not a candidate in the Nov. 8 general election.

Circuit Judge Joseph Loper administered the oath of office to Judge Ross at the Webster County Courthouse in Walthall.

It is Judge Ross's second time to serve on the Fifth Circuit trial court, which includes Attala, Carroll, Choctaw, Grenada,

Montgomery, Webster and Winston counties. Gov. Kirk Fordice appointed Judge Ross to a vacancy on the court in October 1993. He served through December 1994.

Judge Ross said, "It's an honor to rejoin the Court." He said that he looks forward to the opportunity "to serve the people of Mississippi in a role that is very important, requiring judicial insight and temperament and legal acumen. I hope that I can offer that to the folks of the Fifth District."

Judge Loper said, "I appreciate Judge Ross's willingness to come back and help. I look forward to working closely with him to keep the docket current."

Judge Ross resigned as Webster County Attorney to accept the judgeship. He previously served as Mayor of Eupora 1997-2001. He served as Senior Counsel in the U.S. Department of Justice's Envi-

ronment and Natural Resources Division 2008-2009 during the administration of President George W. Bush. He also previously served for almost four years as an assistant district attorney in the state's Fifth Circuit District.

He is a native of Eupora and a fifth generation resident of Webster County. He attended Webster County public schools. He earned a degree in business from the University of Mississippi, and a Juris Doctor from the University of Mississippi School of Law. He served as a law clerk for Judge J. P. Coleman when Judge Coleman was on senior status with the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

He served as a U.S. Navy JAG Corps officer on active duty 1984-1987, then in the U.S. Naval Reserve, retiring at the rank of Commander in 2005.

Supreme Court makes appointments to Bar Complaint Tribunal

The Mississippi Supreme Court has appointed four new members to the Bar Complaint Tribunal, and reappointed five members.

New appointees include Chancellor Jennifer Schloegel of Gulfport, Judge Amy K. Taylor of Philadelphia and attorneys Jason D. Herring and Rachel Pierce Waide, both of Tupelo.

Reappointed Tribunal members are Hinds County Court Judge Johnnie McDaniels of Jackson, Desoto County Court Judge H. Craig Treadway

of Hernando, Rep. Henry B. "Hank" Zuber III of Ocean Springs, and attorneys Mack A. Reeves of Jackson and Renee M. Porter of Columbia.

Chief Justice Mike Randolph signed the appointment order on Aug. 24 on behalf of the unanimous Supreme Court. The new three-year terms on the Tribunal began on Sept. 1 and will conclude on Aug. 31, 2025.

Judge McDaniels, Rep. Zuber, Reeves and Porter have served on the Tribunal since August 2019. Judge Treadway was ap-

pointed to the Tribunal in July 2020.

Judge Schloegel also serves on the Committee on Continuing Judicial Education. She served last year on the task force which studied and made recommendations regarding Mississippi's domestic relations laws. She has served as a chancellor of the Eighth Chancery Court since January 2011. The district includes Hancock, Harrison and Stone counties. She practiced law for 19 years in the areas of business law, estate planning, wills and probate

matters. She earned a Bachelor's degree in English and philosophy from Louisiana State University and a Juris Doctor from the University of Mississippi School of Law.

Judge Taylor has served as Philadelphia Municipal Court Judge since January 2020. She has served as Neshoba County Youth Court Referee and Special Master since 2001, and was appointed in July 2022 as Youth Court Referee and Special Master for Kemper County. She previously served for 11

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Chancellor Jennifer Schloegel

Continued from page 16

years as attorney for the Philadelphia Public School District and for a year as county attorney for Neshoba County. She served for three years on the Mississippi Board of Bar Commissioners. She earned a Bachelor of Business Administration degree, *cum laude*, with emphasis in banking and finance from the University of Mississippi and a Juris Doctor, *cum laude*, from the University of Mississippi School of Law. She worked for the law firm of Crosthwait Terney in Jackson for three years before returning to her hometown of Philadelphia to practice law in September 1997. She has a general law practice with emphasis on workers' compensation defense.

Herring practices law in Tupelo with the firm of Herring Chapman, PA. His practice areas include general civil litigation, criminal law and domestic relations. He provides pro bono assistance at civil legal clinics that assist low income people in the First Chancery District. He served on the Board of Commissioners for the Mississippi Bar. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from



Judge Amy K. Taylor

the University of Mississippi and a Juris Doctor from the University of Mississippi School of Law.

Waide is a shareholder in Waide & Associates, P.A. in Tupelo. She focuses her practice on employment law, personal injury and medical malpractice. She was president of the Lee County Bar Association, the Young Lawyers Division of the Mississippi Bar, and the Lee County Young Lawyers. She is a member of the Executive Committee of the Employment Law Section and the Litigation Section of the Mississippi Bar, and was a member of the Law School Relations Committee and the Seminars Committee. She was chair of the 75th Anniversary Committee of the Mississippi Bar. She is a past president of the Tupelo-Lee Humane Society. Other civic activities include Tupelo Women's Club, United Way and Kiwanis Club. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English, *summa cum laude*, from Mississippi University for Women. She earned a Juris Doctor, *magna cum laude*, from the University of Mississippi School of Law.

Zuber has been a member of the Mississippi



Jason D. Herring

House of Representatives since 2000. He is an attorney and real estate developer. He is chairman of the House Insurance Committee. His committee memberships include Judiciary B, Judiciary En Banc, Ways and Means, Banking and Financial Services, Medicaid and Public Utilities. He is a graduate of Millsaps College, and earned a Juris Doctor from the University of Mississippi School of Law.

Porter has practiced law at the Porter Law Firm in Columbia for 33 years, handling civil litigation, criminal defense and appellate practice. She serves as Youth Court Referee and Special Master in Marion County. She was vice-president of Southeast Mississippi Legal Services and vice-president of Marion County Habitat for Humanity. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Southern Mississippi. She earned a Juris Doctor from the University of Mississippi School of Law, where she was chairman of the Moot Court Board and served as a tutor for first year law students.

Judge McDaniels has served as a Hinds County Court Judge since January 2019. He was executive



Rachel Pierce Waide

director of the Henley-Young Juvenile Justice Center for three years before his election to the bench. He was a Jackson city prosecutor for 13 years, and also served as Utica Municipal Court Judge. The Port Gibson native earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Jackson State University and a law degree from the Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge.

Judge Treadway has served as a DeSoto County Court Judge since February 2017. He was DeSoto County prosecuting attorney 1999 until his 2017 appointment to the bench. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in business and economics from the University of Mississippi and a Juris Doctor from the University of Mississippi School of Law.

Reeves practices law in the Jackson area. His practice area includes personal injury, workers' compensation, product liability and wrongful death. He attended Southwest Community College, where he played soccer and tennis. He earned his undergraduate degree from Mississippi State University and his law degree from Mississippi College School of Law.

Schloegel, Terrett reappointed to Continuing Judicial Education committee



Chancellor Jennifer Schloegel

Chancellor Jennifer Schloegel of Gulfport and Circuit Judge Toni Walker Terrett of Vicksburg were reappointed on July 20 to the Committee on Continuing Judicial Education.

Chief Justice Mike Randolph made the reappointments on recommenda-



Judge Toni Walker Terrett

tions of the Conference of Chancery Court Judges and the Conference of Circuit Court Judges. The two-year terms will end July 31, 2024.

Judge Schloegel has served as a chancellor of the Eighth Chancery Court since January 2011. She

served last year on the task force which made recommendations regarding Mississippi's domestic relations laws. She also was recently appointed to the Bar Complaint Tribunal. She practiced law for 19 years in the areas of business law, estate planning, wills and probate matters. She earned a Bachelor's degree in English and philosophy from Louisiana State University and a Juris Doctor from the University of Mississippi School of Law.

Judge Terrett has served as a judge of the Ninth Circuit Court since January 2019. She was recently inducted as a Fellow of the Mississippi Bar Foundation. She previously served as Vicksburg Municipal Judge for six years, and as

Vicksburg judge pro tempore and Community Court judge for four years. She was coordinator of the Vicksburg Domestic Violence Victims Empowerment Program. She served as a Drug Court public defender and worked for Legal Services. She was a faculty member at Alcorn State University in the Department of Mass Communications. She began her career in journalism as news director and senior producer at the Alcorn State University radio station, WPRL-FM. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry from Tougaloo College, a Master of Arts degree in journalism from the University of Memphis, and a law degree from Mississippi College School of Law.

Supreme Court honors Poplarville attorney Colette Oldmixon

The Supreme Court honored attorney Colette Oldmixon of Poplarville for 26 years of service on the Supreme Court's Advisory Committee on Rules.

During a meeting of the Rules Advisory Committee at the Supreme Court on May 26, Presiding Justice Jim Kitchens presented Oldmixon with a plaque in appreciation for her service. Oldmixon was recognized "for extraordinary service to the bench, bar and people of the state of Mississippi."

Presiding Justice Kitchens said, "The Court is exceedingly grateful to you, Colette. The Committee is of tremendous importance to the Court. The people of Mississippi are

the ultimate beneficiaries of the Committee and this work you have done."

The Advisory Committee on Rules advises the Supreme Court on needs for changes in procedural rules that govern the handling of matters in the courts of the state. Among its current work is a review intended to update the language and make rules of court easier to understand, said Circuit Judge Ashley Hines, chairman of the Rules Advisory Committee.

"It is a tremendous asset" to the Supreme Court, said Chief Justice Mike Randolph.

Presiding Justice Kitchens noted that Oldmixon has assisted the Rules Ad-



Colette Oldmixon, center, was honored by the Supreme Court. Presiding Justice Jim Kitchens, at right, presented the award.

visory Committee a lot longer than she has been an official member. Immediately after she graduated from the University of Mississippi School of Law

in 1981, she went to work for attorney David R. Smith, one of the original members of the Rules Advisory Committee. She

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Supreme Court appoints three to Commission on CLE



Helen Morris

The Mississippi Supreme Court appointed attorneys Helen Morris of Cleveland and Katherine K. Farese of Ashland to the Commission on Mandatory Continuing Legal Education. The Court reappointed attorney Marcus A. McLelland of Petal.

Appointees' terms began Aug. 1 and continue through July 31, 2025.

Morris practices law with Morris and Associates in Cleveland. Her practice includes loan closings, title examinations, wills and estates, family law, negligence and medi-



Katherine K. Farese

cal malpractice. She is a part-time Chancery Court family master, handling child support and involuntary mental health commitments. She serves as board attorney for the Bolivar County Council on Aging, the Bolivar County Community Action Agency and Delta Green Partners. She was board attorney for the City of Mound Bayou for five years, and served for a year as a part-time public defender for Bolivar County. She served as secretary and treasurer of the Bolivar County Bar Association. She was an officer in



Marcus A. McLelland

various PTAs, and was president of the Cleveland Central High and Middle School booster club. She is a graduate of the University of Houston, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in biology in 1985. She earned a Juris Doctor, *cum laude*, from the Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University in 1993. She was admitted to the Mississippi Bar in 1994.

Farese is an associate attorney at Farese, Farese & Farese, P.A. in Ashland. Her practice includes fami-

ly law and criminal defense. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science, *summa cum laude*, from the University of Mississippi in 2016, and her Juris Doctor degree, *magna cum laude*, from the University of Mississippi School of Law in 2019. She served as Executive Editor of the *Mississippi Law Journal*. She was a member of Moot Court Board, Dean's Leadership Council, Women's Law Association and Christian Legal Society. She was also a member of Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society and Phi Delta Phi Legal Honor Society. She was admitted to the Mississippi Bar in 2019.

McLelland has served on the Commission since 2019, and served as Commission chairman 2020-2021. He is a partner in the law firm of Holmes & McLelland PLLC in Petal. His practice includes personal injury, criminal defense and family law. He also serves as part-time public defender for juvenile delinquency cases in Lamar County Youth Court. He graduated from the University of Central Florida in 2000 with a degree in radio and television broadcasting, then worked in broadcasting in Orlando. He worked for an international school in Yokohama and Tokyo, Japan. He earned a law degree from Louisiana State University in 2010, and was admitted to the practice of law that year. He serves as Cubmaster for his children's Cub Scout Pack.

Supreme Court honors Colette Oldmixon *continued from page 18*

assisted Smith with his work for the Advisory Committee.

Oldmixon has been repeatedly renominated as one of the Mississippi Bar's two representatives on the Advisory Committee since she was appointed in 1996. She was Advisory Committee vice-chair 2007-2009, and chair 2010-2013. She became secretary/treasurer in 2014, and continues in that role. She also served as chair of the

Mississippi Rules of Civil Procedure Subcommittee 2006-2015.

"When you point to the person who makes the train run on time, that is Colette," said Judge Hines.

Oldmixon plans to leave the Rules Advisory Committee at the end of her term in December.

The Supreme Court also recognized Oldmixon's work on numerous other bar-related committees. She chaired the Mississip-

pi Bar Ethics Committee 2002-2003, and the Professional Responsibility Committee 2008-2009. She was president of the Mississippi Bar Foundation 2008-2009. She has participated in the Bar's professionalism and ethics orientation for new law students at both law schools since the program began in 2000, and has judged mock trial competitions for students for 24 years.

Mississippi Court Reporters Association elects 2022 officers



Officers of the Mississippi Court Reporters Association are, left to right, Immediate Past President Rose Sanchez, President Phyllis McLarty, President-Elect Melissa Grimes, and Vice-President Brenda Blackburn.

Phyllis K. McLarty of Mantachie was sworn in on April 28 as president of the Mississippi Court Reporters Association. Melissa Grimes of Calhoun City is president-elect. Brenda Blackburn of Hollandale is vice-president.

Susan Alford of Oxford remains secretary, and Mallory Gnade of Kosciusko remains treasurer.

McLarty and Blackburn are court reporters for the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi. Grimes is a court reporter for the 14th Chancery Court. Grimes will assume the presidency in April 2023.

Baria, Teeuwissen, Baptist-Rucker reappointed to Board of Bar Admissions



Marcie Fyke Baria



Pieter Teeuwissen



Gwendolyn Baptist-Rucker

The Mississippi Supreme Court reappointed attorneys Marcie Fyke Baria of Bay St. Louis, Pieter Teeuwissen of Jackson and Gwendolyn Baptist-Rucker of Southaven to the Board of Bar Admissions on Sept. 21.

New three-year terms begin Nov. 1.

Baria has served as chair of the Board since November 2018, having

been selected as an officer by fellow members of the Board. She previously served for three years as vice-chair. She was first appointed to the Board in 2007. Justice Dawn Beam reappointed her for the new term on the Board. Baria practiced law in Jackson and on the Gulf Coast for approximately 25 years and is now retired. She works extensive-

ly with community and non-profit organizations.

Teeuwissen is vice-chair of the Board. He served previous terms as chairman and vice-chairman. He has been a member of the Board of Bar Admissions since March 25, 2002. Presiding Justice Leslie D. King reappointed him to the new term. Teeuwissen previously served as board attorney to the

Hinds County Board of Supervisors and city attorney for the city of Jackson. He practices law at Simon & Teeuwissen, PLLC in Jackson.

Baptist-Rucker has served on the Board of Bar Admissions since November 2010. She was reappointed to the Board by Justice James D. Maxwell II. She is an attorney and certified public accountant. She previously worked for the Internal Revenue Service and served as an adjunct professor of business law, real estate and accounting at LeMoyne-Owen College in Memphis. She is the founder of Baptist Law Firm, PLLC. She also serves on the Board of Directors of North Mississippi Rural Legal Services and on the Board of the Institute of Community Services.

Judges Mozingo, Williamson, Irving serve as Circuit Conference leaders



Judge Tony Mozingo

Circuit Judge Tony Mozingo of Oak Grove was elected chair of the Conference of Circuit Court Judges. Circuit Judge Dal Williamson of Laurel was elected Conference vice-chair, and Circuit Judge Tomika Irving of Fayette was elected secretary-treasurer on April 28 during the Spring Trial and Appellate Judges Conference in Biloxi.

Judge Mozingo previously served as vice-chair



Judge Dal Williamson

and secretary-treasurer of the Conference. He has served the 15th Circuit Court since January 2011, and will retire Dec. 31. He previously was municipal judge for the cities of Purvis and Lumberton. He graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi and Mississippi College School of Law.

Judge Williamson has served as Jones County Circuit Judge since January 2015. Circuit Court



Judge Tomika Irving

judges selected him as secretary-treasurer of the Conference of Circuit Court Judges in April 2021. He practiced law in Laurel and Jones County for 34 years before election to the bench. He is a past president of the Jones County Bar Association, and served as a Bar Commissioner. He earned a Juris Doctor from the University of Mississippi School of Law. He is a

graduate of Jones County Junior College and Mississippi State University.

Judge Irving has served as judge of the 22nd Circuit Court District since January 2019. She previously served for 12 years as municipal judge for the town of Crosby, and for six years as Jefferson County Justice Court Judge. Her private law practice included family law, criminal defense and civil litigation in state and federal courts. She earned Bachelor of Arts degrees in political science and journalism from the University of Southern Mississippi, a Master of Arts degree in political science from Mississippi State University and a Juris Doctor from the University of Mississippi School of Law. She has doctoral studies in administration of justice from USM, and certifications to teach social studies and journalism.

107 take oaths at Mississippi Bar Admissions Ceremony

The Sept. 29 Bar Admissions Ceremony certified 107 new attorneys to practice in Mississippi.

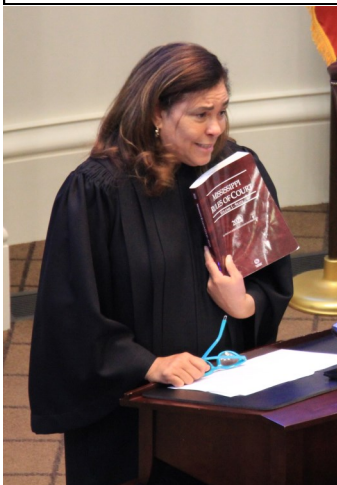
University of Mississippi School of Law Dean Susan Duncan noted that recent graduates navigated difficulties of the COVID-19 pandemic for the entirety of their law school education. “We want to congratulate you on your grace and your grit.”

Mississippi College School of Law Dean John P. Anderson said, “What a crazy three years of law school, but you persevered and you endured and now you passed the bar.”



Recent law school graduates take one of several oaths to practice during Sept. 29 ceremony.

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Judge Denise Owens holds *Mississippi Rules of Court*.

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Michael C. McCabe, representing the Board of Bar Admissions, said that with the Bar Exam, “Each of you has met or exceeded very high standards....You will never be tested like that again in the state of Mississippi, I’m happy to tell you. From here on out your legal knowledge and skills will be tested by the market for legal services. You will be tested by your clients, your peers, your judges. Your grade will largely be reflected by the success of your practice and the respect of your fellow bar members.”

He said Chancellor Larry Primeaux summed up the measure of character and trustworthiness in his The Better Chancery Practice Blog: “Your reputation for trustworthiness with the court is like a treasure of precious gold.” Although Judge Primeaux no longer posts to the blog, the resource of practice tips remains available.

Hinds County Chancellor Denise Owens held up a copy of *Mississippi Rules of Court* before she swore in the new lawyers to practice in state courts.



Justice Kenny Griffis, at left, addresses the Bar Admissions Ceremony. Seated is U.S. District Judge Mike Mills.

“I feel impressed when I see a lawyer walk into court with a Rule Book,” she said.

Justice Kenneth Griffis gave the oath to practice before the Mississippi Supreme Court and Mississippi Court of Appeals. He said, “It’s a great privilege to have a bar license, and with that privilege comes great responsibility.”

Justice Griffis congratulated the new lawyers on their accomplishments, challenged them to make a commitment to a lifetime of learning, and told them to be willing to get out of their comfort zone. “I hope that if you see injustice, you will do something about it....I hope that you do not hesitate to represent people who are in need and who can’t afford you, and I hope that you will take on unpopular clients and even unpopular positions.” He told them to always be civil, ethical and professional.

Justice Griffis said no ceremony would be complete without a quote from Abraham Lincoln or William Shakespeare. He offered this from a letter written by Lincoln after he won the nomination but before he was elected

President: “May the Almighty grant that the cause of truth, justice, and humanity, shall in no wise suffer at my hands.”

U.S. District Judge Mike Mills swore in attorneys to practice law in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Mississippi. He said, “We are in tough times. There is no time in the history of my time being a lawyer where the rule of law was so important. We are absolutely seeing a challenge to the rule of law in the United States and throughout the world. You are the defenders, you are the future, you are our future.”

U.S. Magistrate Judge LaKeysha Greer Isaac, representing the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi, said most have heard the statement that this country has too many lawyers. She offered this response: “America has more lawyers than any comparable nation because America has more individual and economic freedom.... (and) has made an unparalleled effort to see that those who are weak through poverty or otherwise have the assistance of counsel when beset by the powerful.”



Judge LaKeysha Greer Isaac talks to new lawyers.

She said, “There is always room for good lawyers in our country and certainly here in our state of Mississippi....In the long run we will be looking to you and your colleagues to carry forth the very best traditions of the legal profession – pro bono service, representation of unpopular causes, the filling of various roles in state and local government.”

Mississippi Bar President Blake Teller said, “Our profession truly is a calling to serve, a calling to serve others.” He told them, “Deal with others honestly with integrity and fidelity.” He reemphasized the *Mississippi Rules of Court* and told them, “Always conduct yourselves with honor, integrity, civility and fairness in all circumstances.”

He also quoted from Lincoln, who said, “Character is like a tree and reputation like a shadow. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing.” Teller said, “The public’s perception of all lawyers will be influenced by what they see in you and how you conduct yourself. Your reputation will affect the public’s opinion of all of us.”

Supreme Court, Mississippi Bar hold memorial service



Mississippi Bar President Blake Teller, center front, gives Bar Memorial eulogy on Oct. 11.

The Mississippi Supreme Court and the Mississippi Bar on Oct. 11 honored the lives and service of 68 lawyers who died during the past year. The annual Bar Memorial Service was held in the En Banc Courtroom at the Gartin Justice Building in Jackson, Chief Justice Mike Randolph presiding.

The Preamble of the Mississippi Constitution reads “We, the people of Mississippi in convention assembled, grateful to Almighty God, and invoking his blessing on our work, do ordain and establish this constitution.” Consistent with our Constitution, Chief Justice Randolph recognized The Very Rev. Kyle Dice Seage, rector of St. Philip’s Episcopal Church, who gave a moving invocation.

Mississippi Bar President Blake Teller in his eulogy recalled lawyers he knew personally and those he knew by reputation. He recalled the longest serving lawyers, fellow Vicks-

burg attorney Lucius Dabney and Robert B. Deen Jr. of Meridian, who were both admitted to the Mississippi Bar in 1949. He recalled Dabney’s warm smile, hearty handshake and words of wisdom. “And like each of the others I knew personally on this list, I admired the contributions and service to clients and to the profession and, very importantly, to our community.”

Teller said, “Their passing leaves a void that each of us here today should strive to fill – by honoring them and their many contributions to the preservation of society and to the system of justice....Let us pay tribute to those we honor today by renewing our dedication to the ideals of our profession – integrity, civility, professionalism, civic responsibility, compassion, excellence.”

Will Manuel, chair of the Bar Memorial Service Committee, read a resolution which recognized that some of the departed gave

decades of service, while careers of others were cut short. All were remembered for the profound impact each had on the pursuit of justice and upholding the rule of law.

Presiding Justice Jim Kitchens in a response on behalf of the entire court said, “Today’s roster of 68 invaluable members of the Mississippi Bar contains the names of women and men who helped provide the glue that holds the American system of justice together. They went about doing good; they went about helping people.”

Recognized for their public service were: Retired Municipal Judge Jerry Bustin of Forest, District Attorney John Champion of Senatobia, retired Circuit Judge R. Kenneth Coleman of New Albany, U. S. Magistrate Judge John C. Gargiulo of Gulfport, retired Chancellor William L. Grist of Vardaman, Circuit Judge George M. Mitchell Jr. of Eupora, retired Interim U.S. Attor-

ney and Chief of the Criminal Division James B. Tucker of Jackson, retired Circuit Judge and Supreme Court Magistrate Jack B. Weldy of Hattiesburg and retired Assistant Attorney General Marvin L. “Sonny” White Jr. of Jackson.

Others memorialized were Milton F. Anton, Brandon; Buren T. Batson, Jr., Lexington; William M. Beasley, Tupelo; Deborah Lee Bradley, Houston, Texas; Meagan C. Brittain, Madison; James E. Brown, Jr., Starkville; Monique Brown-Barrett, Jackson; Jennifer C. Burford, Birmingham; Tom P. Calhoun III, Greenwood; Samuel S. Creel, Laurel; Lucius B. Dabney, Jr., Vicksburg; Ralph M. Dean, Oxford; Robert B. Deen, Jr., Meridian; James K. Dukes, Petal; John Arthur Eaves, Jackson; Stephen C. Edds, Ridgeland; Charles P. Fortner, Jr., Eupora; John P. Fullenwider, Oxford; Gerald A. Gafford, Oxford; Gerald Gaggini, Tupelo; Wilfred W. Geisenberger, Natchez; Eugene B. Gifford, Jr., Booneville; Samuel S. Goza, Canton; Prentiss M. Grant, Brandon; Dewitt T. Hicks, Jr., Columbus; Jere R. Hoar, Oxford; L. C. James, Ridgeland; Dana E. Kelly, Jackson; Don P. Lacy, Raymond; Hugh M. Love, Jr., Yazoo City; Thomas J. Lowe, Jr., Jackson; William O. Luckett, Jr., Clarksdale; William L. Mathews, Vicksburg; Burwell B. McClendon, Jr., Jackson; Gerald A. McGill, Pensacola; Jo Anne M. McLeod, Ridgeland; Lindsey C. Meador,

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Retired Supreme Court Magistrate Jack Weldy died May 10

Former Circuit Judge and Supreme Court Magistrate Jack B. Weldy of Hattiesburg died May 10 at Mississippi Baptist Medical Center. He was 87.

A memorial service was held on May 20 in Hattiesburg. He was buried in Highland Cemetery.

Judge Weldy served two terms on the 12th Circuit Court of Forrest and Perry counties, 1975 until 1983. He served twice as chairman of the Mississippi Circuit Court Judges Association, and served on the Mississippi Commission on Judicial Performance. He also served on the Joint Committee of Mississippi State and Federal Trial Judges and was a drafter of the Mississippi Rules of Civil Procedure, the Mississippi Uniform Criminal

Bar Memorial

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Cleveland; George O. Miles, Gulfport; David F. Myers, Hattiesburg; James S. Nippes, Madison; Daniel J. O'Beime, Natchez; Thomas J. O'Beime, Natchez; Billy N. Owen, Blue Mountain; Roy O. Parker, Tupelo; Edward P. Peacock IV, Clarksdale; Matthew L. Pepper, Spring, Texas; Jerry B. Read, Gulfport; Joanne S. Samson, Jackson; Tom B. Scott III, Jackson; C. Stevens Seale, Hattiesburg; Daniel P. Self, Jr., Meridian; Brandi S. Shafer, Tupelo; George M. Snellings IV, Monroe, La.; William E. Spell, Sr., Clinton; Robert N. Stockett, Jr., Madison; Thomas W. Tardy III, Madison; Davey L. Tucker, Ridgeland; Michael C. Ward, Nesbit; and James O. Webber, Brandon.

Rules of Circuit Court Practice and the Rules of the Mississippi Commission on Judicial Performance.

Chancellor Deborah Gambrell Chambers of Hattiesburg recalled her first appointment to represent an indigent defendant in Judge Weldy's court. She tried to decline. The defendant was charged with a sex crime. She had never represented anyone on that charge.

"He sat me down and gave me that lawyerly legal talk about our responsibilities and obligations," she recalled. He told her that everyone deserves good representation, and told her to be zealous in her advocacy. "He is the judge that taught me that when you take that oath as a lawyer, sometimes the ones that are the most guilty need the best representation....He kept your feet to the fire when it came to the law, due process and what we were required to do. There were no shortcuts."

Retired Chancellor M. Ronald Doleac of Hattiesburg said, "Judge Weldy was an excellent Circuit Judge and the epitome of an honest, ethical, compassionate and hard-working member of our Bar and Judiciary."

Circuit Judge Jon Mark Weathers practiced before Judge Weldy when Weathers was district attorney. He described Judge Weldy as a bright jurist who knew the law.

"He was always prepared. It was obvious to me that he knew what the law was that applied to a case. I've tried to do the

same thing," Judge Weathers said.

In 1990, the Mississippi Supreme Court began its Appellate Magistrate Program to relieve a backlog of appeals and speed up the issuance of decisions. Three magistrates reviewed appeals and submitted recommendations for case decisions. Judge Weldy served as Senior Magistrate, along with Magistrates Billy Gore and John Fraiser. The Magistrate program served as interim relief for the crowded appellate docket before the Legislature created the Court of Appeals, which began hearing cases in January 1995. Judge Fraiser went on to be elected to the Court of Appeals and became its first chief judge. The Magistrate program was concluded in May 1995.

Chief Justice Armis Hawkins in his State of the Judiciary speech to a joint session of the 1993 Legislature said the magistrate program "kept our judicial boat from absolute swamping."

Jack Burkett Weldy was a native of Hattiesburg, the son of Gabriel Burkett Weldy, Jr. and Mildred Caldwell Weldy. He graduated from Hattiesburg High School, and with honors from Mississippi Southern College, now University of Southern Mississippi, in 1956. He was inducted into the USM Hall of Fame, Who's Who of American Colleges and Universities, and Omicron Delta Kappa. He was regimental commander for his ROTC Unit and received his graduating class' citizenship award.



Retired Judge Jack Weldy

While at USM, he met his bride, Peggy Anderson, to whom he was married for 65 years.

He entered active duty as a lieutenant in the U.S. Army, serving in West Germany as firing platoon commander for a Corporal Missile Unit. He completed active duty in 1958 and accepted a scholarship to Tulane University School of Law. He graduated in 1961 and was employed by Chevron Oil Company as a staff attorney and landman. In 1962, he began the private practice of law in Hattiesburg.

He was a faculty member of the Mississippi Judicial College and a member of the Mississippi Bar Commission on Continuing Legal Education. He was a member of the Mississippi Chapter of the Federal Bar Association, South Central Mississippi Bar Association, Mississippi Bar, American Bar Association and Louisiana State Bar Association. He was active in professional legal organizations including the American Judicature Society, the Mississippi Trial Lawyers Association and the Association of Trial Lawyers of America.