

## MASTER OF JUDICIAL STUDIES PROGRAM 2016-2018 PARTICIPANT BIOGRAPHIES

### **Dinah Lennon Archambeault**

**Associate Judge, Twelfth Judicial Circuit Court of Illinois (Will County)**

*Joliet, Illinois*



Judge Dinah Archambeault was appointed in February 2007, and has been assigned to the Domestic Relations Division since then. She was instrumental in developing and chairs both the Law Student Extern Program for the Court and the Will County Justice Access Corps. She was appointed to serve on the Judicial Conference of Illinois, and is co-chair of the Civil Justice Committee and a member of the Committee on Education. She is trained as a mediator, a Facilitator for Judicial Performance Evaluation, a Peer Judge Mentor, and a presenter of “Seven Reasons to Leave the Party”. She currently serves as Vice President of the Will County

Bar Association and co-chairs its mentor committee. Judge Archambeault was recipient of the Athena Award for professional excellence, community service and assisting women in achieving full leadership potential in 2003 and was a 2015 recipient of the Distinguished Service Award from The John Marshall Law School. Judge Archambeault practiced with the law firm of Spesia & Ayers prior to her appointment to the bench. For 17 years she practiced in the area of civil litigation. Judge Archambeault grew up in Joliet, graduated from St. Francis Academy, Lewis University and The John Marshall Law School, with distinction in 1988. She is married with three grown children and five grandchildren.

### **Jennifer D. Bailey**

**Circuit Court Judge, 11<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court of Florida**

*Miami, Florida*



Judge Bailey has been a circuit court judge in Miami, Florida, for over 23 years. She serves as administrative judge for the Circuit Civil Division, and handles complex business litigation cases. She served as dean of the Florida College of Advanced Judicial Studies, as chair of the Florida Bar Civil Procedure Rules Committee and on the Florida Supreme Court Civil Jury Instruction Committee. Judge Bailey was appointed vice-chair of the Florida Court Education Council by four consecutive Chief Justices of the Florida Supreme Court and chaired the Florida Supreme Court Residential Mortgage Foreclosure Task Force. Judge Bailey currently serves as a member of the

Civil Justice Initiative committee created by the Conference of Chief Justices to evaluate and recommend best practices to reduce cost and delay in state civil courts, and chairs the Court Operations subcommittee. She has served as faculty for the Florida New Judge’s College, the Florida College of Advanced Judicial Studies, and for the Florida Conference of Circuit Court Judges. She has received multiple awards for her service, including 2015 Florida Jurist of the Year from the Florida chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates and the Equal Justice Judicial Leadership Award from Legal Services of Greater Miami in 2011. She is a *magna cum laude* double graduate of the University of Georgia (B.A., 1980, J.D. 1983). Jennifer is married to Mark Bailey, and they have two daughters.

## **Cheri Beasley**

### **Associate Justice, Supreme Court of North Carolina**

*Raleigh, North Carolina*



In 2012, Cheri Beasley was appointed, and in 2014, elected statewide to serve as associate justice of the Supreme Court of North Carolina. In 2008, she was elected to serve as an associate judge on the N.C. Court of Appeals where she served for four years. Appointed in 1999 and subsequently elected in 2002 and 2006, Justice Beasley served for 10 years as a district court judge in the Twelfth Judicial District, Fayetteville, N.C. There she held family and juvenile court certifications and presided in criminal, traffic and civil matters. She also served as an assistant public defender. Justice Beasley is a vice president of the N.C. Bar Association, vice chair of the N.C. Equal Access to Justice Commission and lectures for appellate advocacy and trial advocacy classes at UNC School of Law and NCCU School of Law. Justice Beasley is a 2012 Henry Toll Fellow of the Council on State Governments and the recipient of numerous awards to include induction into the Douglass Society, the highest honor bestowed by Douglass College/Rutgers University, recipient of the Fayetteville State University's Chancellor's Medallion and 2015 Wiley A. Branton Symposium Honoree of the National Bar Association. She is a graduate of the University of Tennessee College of Law and Douglass College/Rutgers University. Justice Beasley and her husband Curtis Owens are the parents of twin teenage sons.

## **Frederic Blockx**

### **Judge, Commercial Court – Belgium**

*Antwerp, Belgium*



Judge Frederic Blockx was born and raised in Antwerp, Belgium. After attending law school there, and after a few years in private practice, he was admitted to the training program of the Belgian judiciary, where he worked at the prosecutor's office as well as in the general court, dealing with civil and criminal cases. He was appointed a judge in the Antwerp commercial court in 2007 and has worked there since, hearing commercial contract cases as well as with intellectual property and unfair market competition cases. Judge Blockx has been a part-time, so called 'delegated judge' with the Belgian Supreme Court (Cour de cassation), a supporting function to the actual justices, since 2012. He is also academically active as a fellow with the University of Antwerp Law School and defended a Ph.D. thesis on the law of professional (especially medical) confidentiality in 2013.

## **Joe Boatwright**

### **Putnam County Court Judge, Seventh Judicial Circuit of Florida**

*East Palatka, Florida*



Judge Joe Boatwright was elected as a county court judge in the Seventh Judicial Circuit for Putnam County, Florida, in 2012. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of Florida, his law degree *summa cum laude* from the Catholic University, Columbus School of Law, and an LL.M. in Taxation from the University of Florida, Levin College of Law. Prior to becoming a judge, he practiced law in both the public and private sectors. His experience includes working as an assistant state attorney in the Seventh Judicial Circuit as both a trial attorney and managing the Putnam County State Attorney's Office. He has also worked in the private sector practicing civil litigation and tax law. Judge Boatwright is an adjunct professor at Florida Coastal School of Law where he teaches courses in legal research and writing, criminal procedure and tax law. In addition, he is currently an adjunct professor at St. Johns River State College where he teaches classes in business law. Judge Boatwright is actively involved in his community through church and civic activities including acting as a board member on several non-profit organizations that work with runaway children, developmentally and intellectually disabled adults, and children with autism.

## **Robert (Bob) Brutinel**

### **Associate Justice, Arizona Supreme Court**

*Phoenix, Arizona*



Justice Robert Brutinel received his law degree from the University of Arizona, and his bachelor of science degree from Arizona State University. He was admitted to practice law in Arizona in 1982 and he entered private practice primarily in the areas of commercial, real estate and Indian Law. He was appointed to the Yavapai County Superior Court (Arizona's general jurisdiction trial court) in 1996 and was elected to that court five times. He became presiding judge of the court in 2004. Justice Brutinel was appointed to the Arizona Supreme Court in 2010, and retained for a full term in 2012. He is a past president of the Arizona Judges Association and the Yavapai County Bar Association, and was named the National Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Judge of the Year. Justice Brutinel has served on the Arizona Supreme Court Committee on Juvenile Courts, the Commission on Judicial Conduct, the Commission on Technology, and the Arizona Judicial Council.

**Hai-Ning Chen**  
**Judge, New Taipei District Court, Criminal Court of Taiwan**  
*Taipei City, Taiwan*



Judge Hai-Ning Chen graduated from the Law School of National Taiwan University. She has served as a judge in criminal courts for nine years at the trial level in the New Taipei and Pingtung district courts in Taiwan. She became a tenured judge in 2011. While serving in the district court, she proceeded First Trial in criminal matters, normal and simple contentious matters. Her specification area includes intellectual property, health and medication, sexual crimes, and felonies. She was appointed to be a two-year term mentor of trainees in academy for the Judiciary of Ministry of Justice in September 2014. She provides practical guidelines and shared trial experience with respect to legal practice to prepare judiciary trainees to become qualified judges and prosecutors. She will return to the district court after her term as a mentor.

**David Collins**  
**Justice, High Court of New Zealand**  
*Wellington, New Zealand*



Justice Collins received LL.B(Hons). and LL.M degrees from Victoria University of Wellington. He was appointed a judge of the High Court of New Zealand in 2012. Prior to then he served six years as solicitor-general of New Zealand. Justice Collins appeared as senior counsel on over 30 occasions in cases before the Privy Council and the Supreme Court of New Zealand. He was the president of the Wellington District Law Society and a vice president of the New Zealand Law Society. Justice Collins is an honorary member of the Law Faculty of Victoria University of Wellington. He is the author of a textbook on medical law and has written numerous articles. His academic qualifications include an LL.D.

**Mark A. Davis**  
**Judge, North Carolina Court of Appeals**  
*Raleigh, North Carolina*

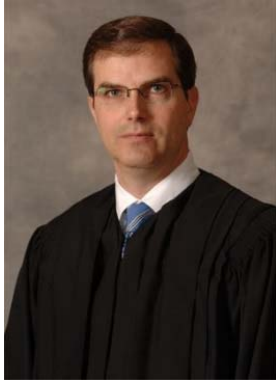


Judge Mark Davis was appointed to the North Carolina Court of Appeals in 2012 and was elected to a full eight-year term in 2014. He served as a special deputy attorney general in the N.C. Department of Justice for five years. He spent 13 years as an attorney at Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice where he was a member of the firm's Litigation Section. He also served as general counsel in the Office of the Governor for approximately two years. Judge Davis received his law degree from the UNC School of Law and served on the *North Carolina Law Review*. He also received his undergraduate degree from UNC Chapel Hill where he was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. Upon graduation from law school, he served as a law clerk to the Honorable Franklin T. Dupree, Jr. in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina. Judge Davis has been active in the N.C. Bar Association, serving on the Appellate Rules Committee and the Bench-Bar Liaison Committee. He is a recipient of the Order of the Long Leaf Pine.

## **Timothy DeGiusti**

### **Judge, United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma**

*Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*



Judge Timothy DeGiusti received a bachelor's degree, with distinction, from the University of Oklahoma in 1985 and is a 1988 graduate of the OU College of Law. He practiced with the firm Andrews, Davis, Legg, Bixler, Milsten & Price in Oklahoma City from 1988 to 1990, and again from 1993 to 2000. He was a founding partner of the Oklahoma City firm Holladay, Chilton & DeGiusti PLLC, where he practiced from 2000 to 2007. He was appointed to the federal bench in 2007. From 1990 to 1993, he was a prosecutor in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Corps, and in 2003 he retired from the Oklahoma Army National Guard after 22 years of combined active and reserve service. Judge DeGiusti was an adjunct professor of law at the OU College of Law from 1998 to 2003, where he taught courses in military law and trial techniques, and was the distinguished jurist in residence for the College's Oxford Program in 2014. Judge DeGiusti was appointed by Governor Brad Henry as a commissioner with the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws, and served from 2003 to 2007. He is a master of the bench with the Luther Bohanon American Inn of Court, and is a director of the Oklahoma City Chapter of the Federal Bar Association. He is a past director of the Oklahoma County Bar Association and a fellow of the American Bar Foundation. In 2012 he received the Oklahoma City Public Schools Foundation Wall of Fame Award. He and his wife, Elaine, have four children.

## **Robert (Chris) Dillon**

### **Judge, North Carolina Court of Appeals**

*Raleigh, North Carolina*



Judge Chris Dillon is a "double Tar Heel," having earned his B.S. in business administration and his J.D. from the University of North Carolina. Following law school, Judge Dillon worked in private practice for a number of years in Raleigh, focusing on administrative, business and real estate law. In the late 1990s, he earned a broker's license from the N.C. Real Estate Commission and worked as a commercial real estate entrepreneur in the Raleigh area. In 2006, Judge Dillon helped start a community bank where he served as a senior vice president. In 2011, he returned to private practice, representing a number of small business owners, professionals and a state occupational licensing board. In 2012, Judge Dillon was elected to an eight-year term on the N.C. Court of Appeals. He currently serves on the N.C. Bar Association's Medico-Legal Liaison Committee and Lawyer Referral Service Committee and on the Friends of the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences Board of Directors. Judge Dillon and his wife, Ann, are the parents of five children.

## **Bernice Donald**

### **Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit**

*Memphis, Tennessee*

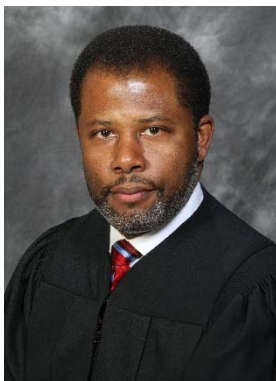


Judge Bernice Donald was appointed to the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit in 2011, becoming the first African American woman to serve on the Sixth Circuit. Prior to joining the Court of Appeals, Judge Donald served on the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Tennessee, the first African American woman to serve on a federal court in Tennessee's history. Judge Donald served as judge of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Tennessee from June 1988 to January 1996. She was the first African American woman in the history of the United States to serve as a bankruptcy judge. When she was elected to the General Sessions Criminal Court in 1982, she became the first African American woman to serve as a judge in the history of the State of Tennessee. Judge Donald received her law degree from the University of Memphis, Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law where she has served as an adjunct faculty member. She frequently serves as faculty for the Federal Judicial Center and the National Judicial College. An internationally recognized legal scholar, Judge Donald has lectured and trained judges around the world for many years. Judge Donald has served as faculty for programs in Romania, Mexico, Turkey, Brazil, Bosnia, Ukraine, Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, Senegal, Rwanda, Tanzania, Russia, Egypt, Morocco, Thailand, Cambodia, Armenia, Jamaica, and Manila. In 2003, Judge Donald led a People to People delegation to Johannesburg and Capetown, South Africa. In 2005, she traveled to Zimbabwe to monitor the trial of a judge accused of judicial misconduct.

## **Myron C. Duhart**

### **Judge, Lucas County Court of Common Pleas, General Trial Division**

*Toledo, Ohio*



Judge Myron Duhart was appointed to the Lucas County Common Pleas Court in January 2011 and was later elected in November 2012. He earned a bachelor of arts in political science from Wright State University, a J.D. from the University of Toledo College of Law, and attended the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. Judge Duhart served as a first lieutenant in the U.S. Army JAG Corp. Prior to taking the bench, Judge Duhart was in private practice for many years in the areas of personal injury and criminal defense. Throughout his career, he litigated a number of high profile criminal cases and was one of a select cadre of attorneys certified by the State of Ohio to handle death penalty cases. Judge Duhart is an adjunct professor at the University of Toledo College of Law where he teaches trial practice. Among numerous awards, Judge Duhart has been recognized by the NAACP for community service in 2004 and 2011. Also in 2011, he was given the "Emerging Leader" award by the African American Legacy Project of Northwest Ohio. Judge Duhart is the past president of the Thurgood Marshall Law Association in Toledo. He is very involved in the community in various capacities and serves on the board of trustees for the Toledo Bar Association, University of Toledo Alumni Association, the University of Toledo College of Law Board of Governors, and Mercy Health System.

**James R. (Jim) Griffith**

**Judge, Supreme Court (Acting) and Family Court – 5<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, New York**

*Rome, New York*



Judge Jim Griffith was born in Rome, New York in 1954, attended local schools, then Princeton University (studying economics) and Columbia Law School (where he was editor-in-chief of the *Columbia Journal of Environmental Law*). Between college and law school, he worked on the staff of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. On admission to the New York Bar, he worked for law firms in New York City, Syracuse, and Oneida County, primarily engaged in civil litigation. He chaired the N.Y. State Bar Association Committee on Citizenship Education and was a director of the Oneida County Legal Aid Society. In 1998, he was elected to the Family Court and in 2001 was appointed acting Supreme Court justice. He founded the county’s Family Drug Treatment Court in 2004, became an ASTAR (Advanced Science and Technology Adjudication Resource Center) Science and Technology Fellow in 2013, and served on the local committee of a Justice Department research project on racially disparate treatment in the New York juvenile justice system in 2013-2014. Judge Griffith is married to Dianne Griffith. They have a son attending college.

**David R. Jones**

**Bankruptcy Judge, United States Bankruptcy Court, Southern District of Texas**

*Houston, Texas*



Judge David Jones was sworn in as a bankruptcy judge for the Southern District of Texas on September 30, 2011. Prior to becoming a judge, he was a practicing lawyer in Houston for approximately 19 years, specializing in bankruptcy and bankruptcy-related litigation. Judge Jones received his J.D. from the University of Houston in 1992 where he served as editor-in-chief of the *Houston Law Review*. He received his M.B.A. from Southern Methodist University in 1986 and his B.S. in electrical engineering from Duke University in 1983. As a practitioner, he has been recognized as a “Leader in the Field” of bankruptcy/restructuring in Texas by Chambers USA since 2009, and has been listed in *The Best Lawyers in America* in bankruptcy and creditor-debtor rights law since 2007. Judge Jones has been selected as a “Texas Super Lawyer” in bankruptcy law in surveys conducted by *Texas Monthly* since 2005 and has been repeatedly named as one of the top 100 lawyers in the Houston region. He has been selected as a top lawyer in Texas for bankruptcy and creditor/debtor rights by *Super Lawyers – Corporate Counsel Edition* since 2009.

**Spencer D. Levine**

**Judge, Florida Fourth District Court of Appeal**

*West Palm Beach, Florida*



Judge Spencer Levine received his bachelor of arts degree from New York University graduating Phi Beta Kappa with honors in history. He received his J.D. from the University of Miami School of Law. He has served on Florida's Fourth District Court of Appeal since April 2009. Prior to his appointment he served as director of the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit in the Florida Attorney General's Office, as well as general counsel to the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office and as an assistant state attorney in the Palm Beach County State Attorney's Office. Judge Levine is presently a member of the Florida Supreme Court Committee on Standard Jury Instructions in Business and Contract Cases, and vice chair of the Florida Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee. He previously served as chair of the Education Committee for the Florida Conference of District Court Appeal Judges and was a member of the Florida Court Education Council. He has served on the faculty of the Florida College of Advanced Judicial Studies and the Prosecutor/Public Defender Trial Training program at the University of Florida School of Law.

**Sarah A.L. Merriam**

**Magistrate Judge, United States District Court for the District of Connecticut**

*New Haven, Connecticut*



Magistrate Judge Sarah Merriam moved to New Haven at an early age and is proud to call the Elm City her hometown. She received a bachelor of arts degree, *cum laude*, from Georgetown University in 1993. She began her legal education at the University of Connecticut School of Law, then transferred to Yale Law School after her first year and received a J.D. from Yale in 2000. Judge Merriam served as an assistant federal defender in the District of Connecticut from 2007 through 2015, representing indigent criminal defendants and witnesses in federal court in all aspects of those cases, including appeals. Prior to becoming an assistant federal defender, she served as an associate at the law firm of Cowdery, Ecker & Murphy in Hartford; as a law clerk to Judge Thomas Meskill of the Second Circuit Court of Appeals; and as a law clerk to Judge Alvin W. Thompson of the U.S. District Court for the District of Connecticut. She was sworn in as a U.S. Magistrate Judge on April 3, 2015.



**David Nuffer****Chief Judge, United States District Court for the District of Utah**

*Salt Lake City, Utah*



Chief Judge David Nuffer was appointed as a U.S. district judge in the District of Utah on March 23, 2012 and became chief judge on September 1, 2014. From 1995 to 2003, he was a part time U.S. magistrate judge, part time lawyer and was appointed as a full time judge January 17, 2003. After graduating from the J. Reuben Clark Law School at BYU he practiced law 25 years in St. George, Utah. During his years as a lawyer, he was a member and chair of the Utah Judicial Conduct Commission and a commissioner and president of the Utah State Bar. He is a frequent lecturer on technology and legal issues and his international activities include presentations to judges, lawyers and law students in Brazil and Czech Republic and rule of law work in Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Sharjah, Egypt, and Ukraine. He serves on the Federal

Judicial Center Judges Executive Education Advisory Committee and teaches at Brigham Young University's J. Reuben Clark Law School.

**Emmanuel Ekundayo Roberts****Justice, Supreme Court of Sierra Leone**

*Wilberforce, Freetown, Sierra Leone*



Justice Emmanuel Roberts is a justice of the Supreme Court of Sierra Leone, a position he has held since 2014. Prior to his appointment to the Supreme Court, he had been a justice of the Court of Appeal for seven years. Justice Roberts has been a judge in the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone, an international criminal tribunal sitting in The Hague and Freetown since 2013. He is chairman of the Interim Management Team for the Judicial and Legal Training Institute in Freetown and Lecturer in Civil Procedure at the Sierra Leone Law School. He is presently a member of several committees, including the Committee for the Establishment of Alternative Dispute Resolution Centre in Sierra Leone set up by the Law Reform Commission,

the Rules of Court Committee, the Council of Legal Education and the Constitutional Review Committee. He is also a member of the Commonwealth Magistrates and Judges Association. Between 2003 and 2007, Justice Roberts was legal consultant in the Law Officers Department. Previously, he was senior partner and head of chambers in Roberts & Partners, and also partner and acting head of chambers in Wright & Co, both private legal firms. Justice Roberts holds a bachelor of laws (Hons), Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone and a B.L. from the Sierra Leone Law School. He is a fellow of the Common Wealth Judicial Education Institute, Canada.

**Jennifer L. Thurston**

**Magistrate Judge, United States District Court for the Eastern District of California**  
*Bakersfield, California*



Magistrate Judge Jennifer Thurston was appointed to the bench of the Eastern District of California in 2009, where she has presided over bench and jury trials while managing civil cases, social security appeals, habeas corpus petitions and prisoner civil rights actions. Before her appointment, Judge Thurston was an active litigator handling civil rights cases, wrongful death actions, elections law challenges and employment disputes. She practiced actively in the federal and state courts and in administrative law proceedings. Judge Thurston became a certified appellate specialist in 2005 and handled more than 100 appeals and writs in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, the Fifth District Court of Appeal and the California Supreme Court. She served on the Appellate Law Specialization Committee to the California State Bar's Board of Legal Specialization and helped to refine specialization standards, to evaluate prospective specialists and to draft and grade specialization examinations. In addition to her role as the ADR judge for the Fresno Division of the Eastern District of California and a member of the District's Technology User Group and the Courthouse Security Committee, she serves on the Ninth Circuit Conference's Magistrate Judge Education Committee, the Technology Subcommittee of the Ninth Circuit Magistrate Judge Executive Board and the editorial board for the Federal Magistrate Judge Association's electronic magazine, *The Bulletin*.

**Ann A. Scott Timmer**

**Justice, Arizona Supreme Court**  
*Phoenix, Arizona*



Justice Ann Timmer was appointed to the Arizona Supreme Court in 2012 by Governor Janice K. Brewer. Prior to her appointment to the Arizona Supreme Court, Justice Timmer was a judge with Division One of the Arizona Court of Appeals from 2000 to 2012. She served as vice chief judge of the Court of Appeals from 2006 to 2008 and as chief judge from 2008 to 2011. Justice Timmer formerly practiced law with private law firms located in Phoenix. Her practice focused primarily on commercial and employment litigation, and she practiced before state and federal trial and appellate courts, and administrative tribunals. Justice Timmer also tried capital murder cases as a defense attorney and later as a special prosecutor. Justice Timmer currently participates in many professional and community activities, including the Arizona Foundation for the Handicapped (non-profit, board vice chair) and acting chair of the Pima County Commission on Trial Court Appointments.

**Tracie A. Todd**

**Judge, Tenth Judicial Circuit for the State of Alabama (Jefferson County)**

*Birmingham, Alabama*



Judge Tracie Todd graduated from Dillard University in New Orleans with a dual Bachelor of Arts in International Business and Japanese studies. She received her law degree from the University of Alabama. After graduating from law school, she served as a Deputy District Attorney for the State of Alabama Tenth Judicial Circuit. In 2010, she was appointed as a municipal court judge for the City of Birmingham, and in 2012 was elected to the Circuit Court for the State of Alabama Tenth Judicial Circuit, Criminal Division. Judge Todd has added to her experience by studying at the Australian National University College of Law in Canberra, ACT, Australia and observed judicial proceedings in the Drakenstein and Pollsmoor prison camps in Capetown, South Africa.

She offered a newspaper commentary, *A Benchside Chat with Judge Tracie* from 2010 to 2012, and continues to actively inform the community on procedural aspects of the judiciary. Judge Todd is a faculty member of the National Judicial College instructing on topics including Implicit Bias, Procedural Fairness, Self-Represented Litigants, The Non-Citizen in Your Courtroom and Effective Use of Courtroom Interpreters. She has received several awards for her service and dedication. Judge Todd is married to Wesley Coleman, and they are the proud parents of a son.