

For all of us at the Court of Appeals, this is a milestone day in our history as we salute Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick who has graced our bench for 19 years.

Carmen Ciparick has enjoyed an historic, trail blazing career in the New York State Judiciary and the legal profession, devoting 45 years to public service, including 34 total years on the bench. On the Court of Appeals, she has distinguished herself over and over again while shaping the law of this State for generations to come.

From St. Johns Law School to her first job in the South Bronx in 1967 as a staff attorney for the Legal Aid Society and throughout her spectacular career as a counsel to the old Judicial Conference, the Chief Court Attorney of the New York Criminal Courts, a Criminal Court Judge, a Supreme

Court Judge and a member of the Court of Appeals, Judge Ciparick's role in the legal world and the Judiciary has been so in keeping with the nobility of the legal profession. She has travelled an incredible road as a young Latino woman from Washington Heights who became a teacher, went to law school at night and ultimately rose to the pinnacle of the profession and the Judiciary.

Carmen Ciparick is the same today as she was over 30 years ago, when I first met her - - the warmest, most caring and gracious person you could possibly know, and the most devoted and loyal of friends. Though she surely appreciates the importance and responsibilities of her lofty position in our majestic courthouse, she is, as you all know, down to earth, kind and incredibly giving.

She is a fabulous colleague and member of the court

family. Nothing seems to get her down - - not the stress that comes from our heavy caseload, nor the pressure from having to make so many difficult decisions on issues critical to all New Yorkers. She finds a way to get through it all with an even-keeled, upbeat and delightful temperament, a tireless work ethic, a great sense of humor and her wonderful smile and laugh. Everyday is fun to our Judge Ciparick as she approaches life with a balance and humanity that helps keep all of us grounded and sane.

While the Court is known to sometimes disagree on a legal issue or two, we are 100% unanimous in our love for Carmen Ciparick and everything she brings to the court. We all feel so very fortunate to be able to draw on her great experience and wisdom, and to bask in the warmth of her sunny disposition.

And the institution of the Court of Appeals and the legal profession in New York has so greatly benefitted from her incredibly substantial body of work here at the Court of Appeals, which includes hundreds and hundreds of insightful and well reasoned opinions that have left an indelible mark on the jurisprudence of our state in so many areas including search and seizure, capital cases, school funding, labor law, and landlord-tenant matters to name just a few. But her impact on the law of this state really cannot be pigeon-holed -- it is so extensive and far reaching that it covers virtually every conceivable subject and part of our jurisprudence.

We on the Court so greatly admire and respect her as a judge, and love her as one of the most unique and wonderful persons we have ever known. Her talents are remarkable and, when combined with her singular persona,

she has had such a tremendous influence here in the conference room and on the ultimate work product of our court. We are all so proud to have Carmen Beauchamp Ciparick as our beloved friend and colleague, and I know every person in this room feels that way.

To all of us, she is not only the first Hispanic woman to sit on New York's trial bench and the first Hispanic to sit on the high court -- she is first in our hearts, she is our best friend, and she is someone who represents the absolute best, bar none, at the high court. We love her dearly and wish her only great health, happiness and good fortune in the many, many years ahead.