



PRESS RELEASE

**New York State
Unified Court System**

**Hon. Lawrence K. Marks
Chief Administrative Judge**

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Hon. Kathie E. Davidson Named Dean of the NYS Judicial Institute

NEW YORK—Chief Judge Janet DiFiore and Chief Administrative Judge Lawrence K. Marks today announced the designation of Hon. Kathie E. Davidson as Dean of the New York State Judicial Institute, a statewide judicial education and research center focused on the latest developments in the law and other disciplines that influence the law. Prior to her appointment, she has been serving as Administrative Judge for the Ninth Judicial District, which encompasses Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland and Westchester counties.

In her new capacity, Judge Davidson will oversee the creation and delivery of training seminars for newly elected and appointed Unified Court System (UCS) judges, continuing education programs for UCS judges and lawyers, and cooperative education programs with state and federal judicial systems, legal academics and other interested stakeholders. She replaces Hon. Juanita Bing Newton, who retired as Dean last December following a distinguished judicial career, and Hon. Sherry Klein Heitler, who subsequently served as Interim Dean.

“Judge Davidson is a seasoned judge and administrator whose experience, collegiality and longstanding commitment to judicial excellence will be great assets to the Judicial Institute and all those it serves. I have every confidence that she will build upon the rich legacy of Judge Bing Newton, promoting dialogue and information-sharing, further solidifying the Institute’s position as a premier site of judicial education, and expanding its portfolio in remaining at the fore of changes in the law and society,” said Chief Judge Janet DiFiore.

“I can think of no better candidate than Judge Davidson—who brings tremendous expertise, understanding and passion to her new role—to lead the Judicial Institute as members of the judiciary and legal profession navigate the many challenges of our post-pandemic environment. She is dedicated, hardworking and places a high value on innovation, collaboration and inclusion,” said Judge Marks, adding, “I want to thank Judge Bing Newton for her leadership of the Judicial Institute for over a decade, and Judge Heitler for stepping in as Interim Dean for the past six months.”

Judge Davidson first joined the bench upon her election to the Westchester Family Court in 2004 and was later appointed Supervising Judge of the Family Courts in the Ninth Judicial District. She was re-elected to the Westchester Family Court in 2014, subsequently appointed an acting Supreme Court Justice and named the Ninth Judicial District’s Administrative Judge in February 2018, becoming the first woman in that position and the first African American to be appointed an Administrative Judge outside New York City. Judge Davidson was elected to the State Supreme Court, Ninth Judicial District, in 2019.

Before ascending to the bench, she served as Deputy County Attorney for the Westchester County Law Department. She is a graduate of the Howard University School of Law. Among her many extra-judicial activities, she is a member of the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission, the New York State Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children, the Commission on Parental Legal Representation, and the Committee on Families and the Law.

Additionally, Judges DiFiore and Marks announced the appointment of an advisory board, to be chaired by Court of Appeals Associate Judge Michael J. Garcia, that will act as a resource to the Judicial Institute, providing insights and recommendations to help guide curriculum development and expand and strengthen its programming. Along with Judge Garcia, acting Supreme Court Justice Dineen Riviezzo, Kings County Supreme Court-Criminal Term, and Court of Claims Judge Walter Rivera will sit on the advisory panel, with additional members to be appointed in the coming weeks.

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