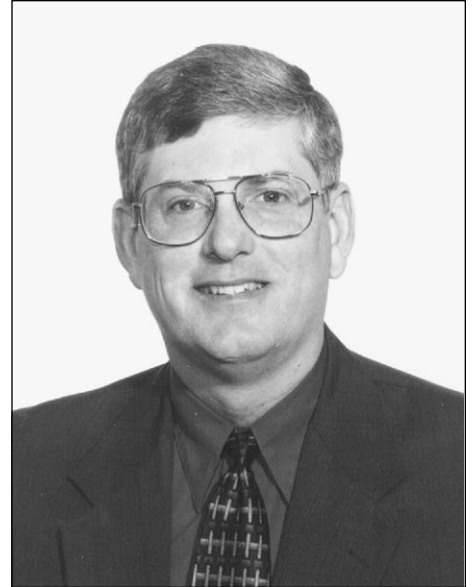


Introducing the New Judges

by **Kevin M. Oeffner**
Circuit Court Administrator



The citizens of Oakland County elected two new circuit judges this past November 5. The new judgeships were created by the Legislature in response to the State Court Administrative Office's determination that the Oakland Circuit and Probate courts were in need of at least four more judgeships given our caseload volume, caseload complexity, and Oakland County population and other demographics. A few weeks later – on December 17, to be exact – the governor appointed a new judge to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Circuit Judge Alice Gilbert. Please take a moment to meet the three new judges of the Oakland Circuit Court.

The Honorable Michael Warren (Michael D. Warren Jr.) was named by Governor Engler to succeed former Circuit Judge Alice Gilbert. Judge Warren began his career as circuit judge on Monday, December 23, 2002. He resides in Beverly Hills with his wife, Shannon Richey, and four-year-old daughter, Leah. In taking his seat on the bench, Judge Warren stepped down from his position as executive director of The New Common School Foundation in Detroit. The Foundation's mission is to assist schools to become models of excellence in urban education. In addition to his duties as executive director, he also acted as general counsel and Secretary for the Foundation and Cornerstone Schools Association.

Judge Warren recently served as a member of the State Board of Education. Prior to his term in office on the Board, Judge Warren served as legal counselor and policy advisor to the Board in the mid-1990s. He is a former partner at the law firm of Honigman, Miller, Schwartz and Cohn in Detroit, and a former law clerk for Supreme Court Justice Dorothy Comstock Riley. Judge Warren served as an appellate attorney for the firm of Kitch, Saurbier, Drutchas, Wagner & Kenny, P.C. in Detroit in the early 1990s.

Community involvement is near and dear to Judge Warren. He presently serves on the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society, Michigan and National Federalist Society, the Michigan Civics Institute, the Michigan School Boards Leaders Association, and as a member of the Holocaust Memorial Center. The judge is a graduate of

Wayne State University. He earned his law degree *cum laude* from the University of Michigan in 1992.

Judge Warren is assigned to the General Jurisdiction Division and will take over the docket previously assigned to Judge Gilbert. He has assumed Judge Gilbert's chambers and courtroom (5B) located on the fifth floor of the Courthouse. Judge Warren's criminal call begins precisely at 1:15 on Mondays. At the time of this writing, Judge Warren has not hired his judicial secretary or judicial staff attorney. Kameshia Gant and Ayanna Jordan have been named by the judge to serve as his court clerks. Judge Warren's central business telephone number is 248-975-4250.

The Honorable Daniel Patrick O'Brien was elected to an eight-year term this past November. Judge O'Brien makes his home in Holly and is one of only two circuit judges who reside in the northern part of Oakland County. He ascended to the circuit bench on January 1. Judge O'Brien earned his law degree from the University of Detroit School of Law in 1994. He also holds degrees from Oakland Community College and the University of Detroit Business School, graduating *summa cum laude* from both institutions.

Judge O'Brien is no stranger to the Oakland Circuit Court. His father, Francis X. O'Brien, and his uncle, the late John N. O'Brien, both served as circuit judges in Oakland County for many years. Judge O'Brien served as law clerk in the Royal Oak District Court in the early 1990s, and as law clerk in the Oakland Circuit Court from 1992 to 1996. He also served as a judicial staff attorney in the Oakland Circuit Court. His experience includes service as an assistant prosecuting attorney in Oakland County, an assistant city attorney for the City of Royal Oak, and an assistant municipal attorney and prosecutor for several Oakland County communities. Prior to his election to the circuit bench, Judge O'Brien was a partner in the Law Firm of O'Brien and O'Brien.

Judge O'Brien was assigned to the Family Division, taking over the docket of Judge Patrick Brennan, who was

assigned to the General Jurisdiction Division in late December. Judge O'Brien's chambers and courtroom (2C) are located on the second floor of the courthouse tower. This location holds sentimental value to Judge O'Brien given that his father served in this chambers and courtroom at the outset of his tenure as a circuit judge.

Judge O'Brien named Barb Reznick as his judicial secretary. Annette Agazio and Anne Modelski are serving as Judge O'Brien's court clerks. Judge O'Brien has not named his judicial staff attorney at the time of this writing. You may reach the judge or his staff by contacting his central business number at 248-858-7953. Please be reminded that we have two Judge O'Briens on the bench. The Honorable Colleen O'Brien (no relation to Judge Daniel Patrick O'Brien) was elected to the bench in 1998 and is located on the fourth floor (4C) of the courthouse tower where she presides over a General Jurisdiction docket.

Our third judge is **the Honorable Martha D. Anderson**. Judge Anderson was elected to a six-year term on November 5. She fills the second of the two new judgeships created by the Legislature. Judge Anderson was assigned to a newly created Family docket, which she has presided over since January 1.

Judge Anderson and David, her husband of 23 years, make their home in Troy. They have one daughter, Elizabeth, who is attending college. Judge Anderson holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Wayne State University, and earned her juris doctor from the University of Detroit Law School in 1977. She has been a practicing attorney for 25 years, serving the last 23 years as a Friend of the Court referee in Oakland County, where it's estimated that she's handled more than 6,000 hearings on child support, spousal support, and custody and parenting time issues.

Judge Anderson has been the recipient of extensive referee and mediation training through the Referees Association of Michigan, the Michigan Support Council, the Family Law Section of the State Bar of Michigan, and the Michigan Judicial Institute. She also attended the National Judicial College at the University of Nevada, specializing in family court proceedings. Judge Anderson is a frequent lecturer on family law issues, both nationally and internationally. She appeared on the CBS news show "48 Hours," representing the Friend of the Court.

Judge Anderson's commitment to family law is well established. She maintains her membership on the Advisory Committee of the State Court Administrative Office, Friend of the Court Bureau, the Family Law Section of the State Bar of Michigan, and the Michigan Family Support Council. Her service extends to the community – particularly in helping battered and abused women and children, where she has been actively involved with projects sponsored by the South Oakland Shelter, HAVEN and Lighthouse.

Judge Anderson has completed filling her staff positions. Her judicial staff attorney is Amy Keif, Kathy Rose is serving as her judicial secretary, and Arifa Khan and Andrea Padilla are serving as Judge Anderson's court clerks. The judge is located in one of two new courtrooms (W2) recently constructed on the first floor of the West Wing Extension to the Courthouse. This is the building where the Prosecutor's Office is located. Chief Probate Judge Linda Hallmark occupies the second of the new courtrooms (W1) located in this building. Judge Anderson's central business number is 248-858-7954.

Our new judges will be fine additions to the Oakland Circuit bench. Please join me in welcoming Judges Warren, O'Brien, and Anderson. I'm sure they would like to hear from you.

Until next time...