



NEWS RELEASE

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SAN DIEGO SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE JOAN M. LEWIS RETIRES

After more than two decades of service with the Court, Superior Court Judge Joan M. Lewis is retiring from the bench as of December 28, 2018. Appointed by Governor Pete Wilson in 1998, Judge Lewis began her judicial career presiding in Family Court, and in 2003 until her retirement, presided over Superior Court Civil Independent Calendar cases. Most recently, Judge Lewis served as the Assistant Supervising Civil Independent Calendar Judge. In September 2017, Judge Lewis was honored as a recipient of the Witkin Award for excellence in the practice of law and advancing access to justice.

Judge Lewis has also been active in her career serving in multiple leadership positions on judicial committees, including the Court's Executive Committee, Civil Courts Policy Committee and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Committee. She also served as Vice President of the California Judges Association for two terms, three years on the California Judges Association Executive Board, and the Judicial Advisory Board of the Association of Business Trial Lawyers. Judge Lewis's participation and expertise has been of great value to the operational workings of the Court locally and throughout the state of California.

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Known for a thoughtful and fair command of her courtroom, Judge Lewis has presided over many high-profile cases, including *Lopez v. Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York (Jehovah's Witnesses Church)*, and California Class Action lawsuit *Hall v. Rite Aid Corporation*.

Presiding Judge Peter C. Deddeh said, "Throughout her distinguished career, Judge Joan Lewis handled a variety of challenging assignments. During her fifteen years in a Civil Independent Calendar Department, Judge Lewis established herself as one of the Division's most capable jurists. Her colleagues on the bench also recognized Judge Lewis' outstanding leadership skills, electing her to the Executive Committee several times during her 20-year career. Judge Lewis' ability to lead was also prominently displayed in her role as the Assistant Supervising Judge for the entire Civil Division of the San Diego Superior Court."

Judge Lewis brought diverse experience and expertise in civil private law to the Court, having practiced civil law as a partner at Lewis, D'Amato, Brisbois & Bisgaard, 1990-98, and prior to that, at the law firm of Ault, Midlam & Deuprey, 1987-90. A native of New York, Judge Lewis earned degrees from State University of New York at Upstate Medical Center; Arizona State University, and eventually earning her Juris Doctorate from California Western School of Law. Lewis also co-authored "Legal Implications and Strategies for Managing Complications in Spinal Surgery," in 2004.

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“It’s an understatement to say that it has been an honor and a privilege to serve on the bench in San Diego on behalf of the State of California. My judicial colleagues have always been an inspiration to me, and are amongst the finest in the state,” said Judge Lewis. “It has also been a privilege to preside over very bright and experienced attorneys who bring their best to the legal system every day.”

Judge Lewis plans to stay active in the legal community providing private dispute resolution as a mediator and arbitrator.

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