



# NEWS RELEASE

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA • COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
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## Superior Court Judge Gale E. Kaneshiro Retires

Judge Gale E. Kaneshiro, a jurist who spent a three-decade judicial career presiding over criminal and appellate cases, will officially retire from San Diego Superior Court on February 29, 2020.

Appointed to the Municipal Bench in 1989 by then governor George Deukmejian, Judge Kaneshiro elevated to the Superior Court in 1998 through court consolidation. Judge Kaneshiro presided for more than two decades in criminal courtrooms and numerous high profile cases including: *People v. Mon Smann* (2009), a double homicide on the grounds of Morse High School where the defendant was extradited from Cambodia to face a jury eight years after the crime was committed, *People v. Marc Levine* (2006), where Levine, a local attorney, was found guilty of defrauding family and friends of hundreds of thousands of dollars, and *People v. Paul Whitmore* (2003), a case involving an international child pornography ring. In the *Whitmore* case, Judge Kaneshiro gave Mr. Whitmore the maximum sentence she was allowed to impose--over 400 years to life imprisonment.

Throughout her career, Judge Kaneshiro also served the court internally by devoting her time to numerous committees dedicated to strengthening the court system, including the

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Education Committee, the Court Technology Committee and the Criminal Courts Policy Committee. She says the highlight of her career has been her final project which she's been working on for the past few months: "I've been updating a jury trial script that for over the last 25 years has been used by nearly all new judges in the state when they take their first criminal law assignment. When I first took the bench 31 years ago, there was no readily available resource for judges conducting jury trials so I created one; I believe it is the only resource of its kind in the state. This resource suggests how judges should conduct criminal jury trials and provides references on issues that may arise during the trial. The script's revision has taken a lot more time and effort than I anticipated, but it is my parting retirement gift to the California judiciary."

"Judge Kaneshiro has made a lasting imprint on the California Judiciary. She has devoted her judicial career to mentoring newer judges and her criminal trial jury script is an outstanding resource that is invaluable in complex criminal trials. She will be missed," says San Diego Superior Court Presiding Judge Lorna Alksne.

Judge Kaneshiro joined the bench after serving as Deputy District Attorney (1978-89) and Deputy City Attorney (1978). She earned her BA from Boston University and her law degree from Washington University Law School in St. Louis, Missouri.

"I've enjoyed my time on the bench but it is time to turn the reins over to a younger generation. After 31 years on the bench, it is time to let go. I will miss many of my colleagues who have become close friends, but I'm anxious to make new friends. I will miss the mental stimulation that came with the position, especially in the last 7 years as an appellate judge for the court doing a lot of research and writing, but I look forward to new forms of mental stimulation," says Judge Kaneshiro.

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In retirement, Judge Kaneshiro plans to volunteer in her community and spend more time with friends and family, especially her granddaughter.

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