



# Supreme Court of Illinois

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## **CHIEF JUSTICE GARMAN URGES INCREASED BAR ASSOCIATION INVOLVEMENT IN PUBLIC EDUCATION ABOUT THE LEGAL SYSTEM**

Illinois Supreme Court Chief Justice Rita B. Garman outlined several priorities for her three-year term, and urged the organized bar to become more involved in educating the public about legal principles and procedures.

She also called on Illinois lawyers, through their bar associations, to participate more in the administrative rule-making and other activities of the Supreme Court and its committees.

Chief Justice Garman became the second woman to head Illinois' third branch of government when she was installed as Chief on October 28. She said that during her tenure as Chief Justice she will continue the Supreme Court's emphasis on civility and professionalism in the legal profession; will work to ensure "prompt judicial decision-making" at all levels of the court system; tailor judicial education programs to include the complexities of today's litigation; and support increased use of technology in courthouses and courtrooms to make the system more efficient and more transparent.

Chief Justice Garman noted that "Courts are where the people meet the promise of this nation. The four goals that I have set out—civility and professionalism, prompt decision-making, increased use of technology and judicial education—all serve to make our courts more able to meet that promise."

Chief Justice Garman made her comments at a luncheon Wednesday in Chicago. It was hosted by the Chicago Bar Association, the Illinois State Bar Association, the Women's Bar Association of Illinois and the Appellate Lawyers Association.

The collective goal of her tenure as Chief Justice is "to do the work that the Constitution assigns to the judicial system on behalf of the people of the State of Illinois; and I want to do this work as efficiently and effectively as possible," she said.

She called for the support and cooperation of all levels of the judiciary, court personnel and members of the Illinois bar in helping to achieve that goal.

**MORE**

## **Chief Justice Garman Urges Increased Bar Association Involvement in Public Education Add One**

She said lawyers can and should provide an instrumental role in improving public understanding of the judicial process, even clarifying and correcting misleading or erroneous material publicized through the media.

"The media do not always understand how the judicial system operates," the Chief Justice said. "There are "common misunderstandings about the law itself and the judicial function. The Court is limited in its ability to counter such confusion . . . We cannot speak out publicly to combat misunderstandings in specific cases, but the members of the bar, either individually or collectively through the various bar associations, can certainly and should do so."

Chief Justice Garman also encouraged bar associations to become more involved in the rule-making and other activities of the Supreme Court and its committees.

"Attend open meetings. Write letters to committee chairs. Discuss proposed rule changes at your meetings and communicate your opinions to members of the Rules Committee and the Court," she said.

"Justice Sandra Day O'Connor once said that 'We don't accomplish anything in this world alone . . . Whatever happens is the result of the whole tapestry of one's life and all the weavings of individual threads from one to another that creates something.'

"I invite the bar associations, and all of their members, to be a part of the tapestry that I hope to weave over the next three years."

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