



Supreme Court of Illinois

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SUPREME COURT NAMES JEFFERSON COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY AS RESIDENT CIRCUIT JUDGE

The Supreme Court of Illinois announced Thursday the appointment of Jefferson County State's Attorney Nicole L. Villani as a Circuit Judge in the Second Judicial Circuit.

Ms. Villani was appointed to fill the resident Circuit Court seat which will become vacant upon the December 31, 2011 retirement of Circuit Judge Terry H. Gamber.

The appointment is effective January 1, 2012 and will expire December 3, 2012, when the position will be filled by the winner of the 2012 General Election.

Prior to serving as Jefferson County state's attorney, Ms. Villani, 41, practiced in family law, civil litigation and criminal defense with the Mt. Vernon law firm of Villani and Villani for six years. From 1998-2004, she worked as first assistant state's attorney in Jefferson County. For two years, Ms. Villani served as assistant state's attorney for Franklin County.

Ms. Villani received a B.A. degree in Political Science from the University of Illinois in 1992. She received her *juris doctor* degree from Southern Illinois University School of Law in 1995.

She was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1995, and has also been admitted to practice in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Illinois and is certified as lead counsel by the Illinois Supreme Court to handle death penalty cases.

Ms. Villani is member of the Illinois State and Jefferson County Bar Associations. A member of several local civic organizations, Ms. Villani was appointed board member of the Court Appointed Special Advocates (C.A.S.A) of Jefferson County from 2006-2009.

Ms. Villani was chosen in an application process that included review by a six-member screening committee appointed by Supreme Court Justice Lloyd A. Karmeier, who recommended Ms. Villani to the Court.

MORE

Supreme Court Appoints Villani as Circuit Judge Add One

Each applicant was interviewed and their credentials reviewed by members of the screening committee before forming a short list of recommended candidates to be interviewed by Justice Karmeier.

The screening committee members were: Morris Lane Harvey of the Morris Lane Harvey law office in Mt. Vernon; Louis Costa, former Clerk of the Fifth Judicial District; Matthew Flanigan, attorney with the law firm of Black, Hedin, Ballard, McDonald in Mt. Vernon; Ronald J. Giacone, sole practitioner in Benton; David Harrison, sole practitioner in Fairfield; and Julie A. Webb, attorney with the law firm of Craig & Craig in Mt. Vernon.

Jefferson County is one of 12 counties in the 2nd Judicial Circuit; the Second Judicial Circuit is also comprised of the southern Illinois counties of Crawford, Edwards, Franklin, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Lawrence, Richland, Wabash, Wayne and White.

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