



Supreme Court of Illinois

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SUPREME COURT ASSIGNS CIRCUIT JUDGES LISA HOLDER WHITE AND THOMAS HARRIS, JR. TO FOURTH DISTRICT APPELLATE COURT

The Illinois Supreme Court and Justice Rita B. Garman have announced the assignment of two Circuit Court judges to the Appellate Court for the Fourth Judicial District.

Circuit Judge Lisa Holder White from the Sixth Judicial Circuit was assigned to fill the vacancy created by the death of the Hon. John McCullough. She will become the first African-American to be seated on the Fourth District Appellate Court.

The assignment is effective January 14, 2013 and will terminate December 1, 2014, when the position is filled by the 2014 General Election.

In a separate Order, the Supreme Court assigned Circuit Judge Thomas M. Harris, Jr. from the 11th Judicial Circuit to fill the position on the Appellate Court formerly held by Appellate Justice M. Carol Pope, who was elected to the Appellate Court. Judge Harris' assignment is effective January 3, 2013 and will continue until further order of the Court.

"I am very pleased to announce the assignment of Judges White and Harris to the Appellate Court," Justice Garman said. "Both judges have outstanding careers on the circuit bench and are highly respected by members of the bench and bar.

"I am confident they will be worthy additions to the Appellate Court."

Judge White said that with her assignment to the Appellate Court, a long-held dream has developed into more than what she had originally thought.

"When I was 12 years old, I made the decision to become an attorney. That was a lifelong dream of mine and I was able to accomplish that and also serve as an associate and circuit court judge," Judge White said. "My initial dream of becoming an attorney has developed into something much more, even more special to me now that I have been named an Appellate Court justice.

"I am thankful to the Supreme Court and to Justice Garman for the opportunity and I am ready to serve the citizens of the Fourth Judicial District."

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Judge White graduated with high honors from Lewis University with a B.A. degree in political science. She received her *juris doctor* degree from the University of Illinois College of Law in 1993.

Before her appointment to the bench, Judge White worked for six years as associate and partner with the law firm of Brinkoetter Law Office in Decatur, six years as assistant public defender for the Macon County Public Defender's office and nearly two years as a Macon County Assistant State's Attorney.

Judge White has presided over various matters ranging from small claims disputes to felonies. She currently serves as the Supervising Judge of the Criminal Law Division.

Judge White is a member of the Illinois Judicial Conference, and serves as chair of the Illinois Judicial Conference Committee on Education. She is also an instructor for "New Judge School" for all new judges in Illinois. In addition, Judge White teaches at the biennial Education Conference, a continuing education conference for state court judges.

Judge White is a member of the Decatur Bar Association and the Illinois Judges Association. She previously served on the boards of the Decatur Public Schools Foundation and the Mid-Illinois Chapter of the American Red Cross. She currently serves on the boards of the Community Foundation of Macon County and Millikin University.

Judge Harris said that he looks forward to continuing his work on the bench by serving the residents of the Fourth Judicial District as an Appellate Court Justice.

"I am honored to accept this assignment by the Supreme Court and I look forward to serving the people of the Fourth Judicial District," Judge Harris said. "I am humbled by the confidence that the Supreme Court and Justice Garman have placed in me."

Judge Harris received his B.A. degree from the University of Illinois in 1985 and his *juris doctor* from the University of Colorado in 1988.

Before his service on the bench, he was Logan County Assistant State's Attorney; and in private practice with the Lincoln law firm of Harris & Harris from 1988-1991 and with the Bloomington law firm of Jerome Mirza and Associates, Ltd. from 1991 to 2007.

Judge Harris has been a resident Circuit Judge in Logan County since 2008. He served as an associate judge from 2007-2008.

Judge Harris has been a Judicial Performance Evaluation facilitator since 1997. He also is a member of the Special Supreme Court Committee to Study Courtroom and Judicial Security and served as a member of the faculty for the Illinois Judicial Conference.

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Judge Harris also has been a member of the editorial board for Illinois Bar Journal since 2003 and served as the Journal's editor-in-chief from 2010-2012. He also served for five years as a member of the board of directors for the Illinois Bar Foundation.

He is a member of the Illinois State Bar Association and the Illinois Judges Association.

The Fourth District is composed 30 central Illinois counties spanning from Iowa to Indiana. Those counties are: Adams, Brown, Calhoun, Cass, Champaign, Clark, Coles, Cumberland, DeWitt, Douglas, Edgar, Ford, Greene, Jersey, Livingston, Logan, Macon, Macoupin, Mason, McLean, Menard, Morgan, Moultrie, Piatt, Pike, Sangamon, Schuyler, Scott, Vermilion and Woodford.

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