

CHIEF JUDGE WILLIAMS ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA – Chief Judge Felicia Toney Williams has announced her retirement from the Second Circuit Court of Appeal, State of Louisiana. Her retirement, effective September 30, 2020, marks the end of a 30-year judicial career. “There is never a good time to leave,” Chief Judge Williams stated. “However, I feel comfort in knowing that I have faithfully served the judiciary for over 30 years with dignity, integrity and to the best of my ability. Now, I will take time to enjoy the fruits of my labor.”

Chief Judge Williams is a 1977 graduate of Southern University (BA, Political Science, magna cum laude) and a 1980 graduate of Southern University School of Law (Juris Doctor, cum laude), where she was editor-in-chief of the *Law Review*. After graduation, she worked as an attorney for the U.S. Department of Justice, Central Louisiana Legal Services, staff attorney for the Louisiana Supreme Court, assistant D.A. for the Sixth JDC District Attorney (East Carroll, Madison and Tensas parishes), and in private practice at Williams & Williams APLC. She was elected judge of the Sixth JDC in 1990, first elected to the Second Circuit in 1992, won unopposed reelection in 2002 and 2012, and became chief judge in October 2018. She was the first female and first African American female elected to the Second Circuit, and the first African American to serve as its chief. She also sat as an Associate Justice, *pro tempore*, on the Louisiana Supreme Court in 1994.

Chief Judge Williams’s professional, civic and business affiliations are numerous, including the Louisiana State, Shreveport, New Orleans, American and National Bar Associations, the Louisiana and National Judicial Councils, the American and Louisiana Bar Foundations, the Louis A. Martinet Legal Society, Fred Fudickar Jr. American Inn of Court, Order of Eastern Star and New Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, in Tallulah, Louisiana. She also received the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Award, in Shreveport, in 2009, the Harry Blake Award, in 2019, and is recognized in *Who’s Who in American Law*. She is especially proud of her initiative to coach young people in the delta parishes of East Carroll, Madison and Tensas.

Chief Justice Bernette Johnson, of the Louisiana Supreme Court, praised Chief Judge Williams for her “commitment to justice evidenced by her impeccable 30-year career in the judiciary.” Associate Justice Scott Crichton joined the tribute. “It has been my experience to witness her dedication to the rule of law. She is to be commended for her years of service.”

Chief Judge Williams was born in 1956 in Newellton, Louisiana, to the late A.C. Toney and the late Ernestine Edison Toney, and graduated from McCall Senior High School, Tallulah, in 1974, with honors. She is married to attorney Moses Junior Williams, and is the mother of Rhonda W. Jackson, Myra Meshell Williams and Justin Junior Williams, and the proud grandmother of Christian and Camryn Jackson.

Upon Chief Judge Williams’s retirement, Judge D. Milton Moore III, of Monroe, will assume the seat of Chief Judge. Judge Moore has been on the court since January 2003. The Louisiana Supreme Court has appointed retired Justice Joe Bleich as judge *pro tempore* to fill Chief Judge Williams’s seat through May 2021, or until the vacancy is filled.

###