



Supreme Court of Florida

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Orlando Circuit Judge Alice L. Blackwell presented Judicial Excellence Award

NAPLES – Ninth Judicial Circuit Judge Alice L. Blackwell, an effective champion of domestic violence prevention and protections, long-time contributor to judicial education, and tireless advocate for judicial accountability is the 2018 recipient of the Chief Justice Award for Judicial Excellence. Justice Jorge Labarga, who completed his term as chief justice in June, presented the award to Judge Blackwell during a ceremony at the Conference of Circuit Court Judges of Florida.

Judge Blackwell rose to the circuit bench in 1991 in the Ninth Judicial Circuit. She earned her law degree from the University of South Carolina School of Law. She has served in the criminal, civil, family, business court, and domestic violence divisions of the circuit court. In 1998, Judge Blackwell served as administrative judge for the circuit civil courts in Orange County, becoming the first woman administrative judge in Orlando.

“Alice Blackwell personifies and exudes all that define judicial excellence,” according to one of the letters nominating her. “She has been one of our branch’s true leaders, underscoring her selfless devotion toward the constant improvement of our justice system.”

Judge Blackwell led reform of Orange County’s domestic violence docket now featuring specially trained judges supported by full-time case managers. She was a co-founder of and first president for The Central Florida Family Law Inn of Court to foster professionalism and civility among those representing people during very stressful and emotionally charged times in their lives. She has since 1996 taught at the Florida Judicial College and the College of Advanced Judicial Studies. For a decade, Judge Blackwell was chair of the Supreme Court Commission on Trial Court Performance and Accountability.

“Her 25 years on the bench embody the spirit of this award,” wrote one of her colleagues in support of her nomination. “Her accomplishments over that time reflect passion for the domestic violence community, commitment to the relationship between the bench and the bar, devotion to education, and accountability to the citizens of Florida.”

The Chief Justice Awards for Judicial Excellence, established in 2014, recognize one county court judge and one circuit judge who demonstrate exceptional commitment to the judicial branch and who personify judicial excellence. The county judge recipient, Judge Belle B. Schumann, was announced in July.

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