

United States District Court  
for the District of Columbia

**Presentation of Portrait**  
**HONORABLE**  
**NORMA HOLLOWAY JOHNSON**

Thursday, December 11, 2003  
4:00 p.m.  
The Ceremonial Courtroom  
United States Courthouse  
Sixth Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20001

# Proceedings

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**CHIEF JUDGE HOGAN:** Ladies and gentlemen, as Chief Judge of the United States District Court, on behalf of all of the Judges of the Court, I welcome you here today for the purpose of receiving the portrait of Senior Judge Norma Holloway Johnson. We are so delighted that we can all be here to recognize her great service to our court.

I will have a few remarks a bit later, but today, first, I would like to recognize some of the special guests that are here. I would like to recognize Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, the Judges of the United States Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia Circuit, the Judges of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, Judges of the Superior Court for the District of Columbia, our Magistrate Judges, and Judge Teal of our Bankruptcy Court. We thank you all for attending.

There are some special guests here of Judge Johnson's that I would like to recognize. We have Chief Judge Consuelo B. Marshall from the United States District Court for the Central District of California; Judge Charles N. Clevert, Jr., from the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin; Judge Robert Tignor, from the D.C. Superior Court, is joined by his family. We are very pleased to recognize Judge Johnson's family who are here today. Among those present are her husband, Judge Julius Johnson; Ms. Barbara Clark, Judge Johnson's sister; Mr. Perry Clark, her nephew, and he happens to be also the head basketball coach at the University of Miami. One of his sister teams just played Maryland last night. It was a pretty good game.

(Laughter.)

**CHIEF JUDGE HOGAN:** And Ms. Katherine Tignor, Judge Johnson's aunt, is with us today, and we welcome you all to our court.

I would also like to recognize in the courtroom the present and former law clerks of Judge Johnson, as well as the members of her staff.

Of course, I'd like to recognize the artist, Mr. Simmie Knox.

Thank you all for coming.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, at this time we're going to recognize our first speaker, and that's the Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States Sandra Day O'Connor.

Justice O'Connor.

**ASSOCIATE JUSTICE O'CONNOR:** Thank you, Chief Judge Hogan.

Judge Johnson, what a pleasure it is to be here today to participate in the presentation to the District Court of your portrait.

Judge Johnson and I met soon after my arrival here in the District of Columbia. I came in 1981, and Judge Johnson had been appointed as a District Court Judge the preceding year, in 1980.

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Now, we met in my exercise class. That's an unlikely place, but the fact is that we judges have to sit on the bench a lot, and it's a pretty sedentary occupation, I want to tell you. If there are any aspiring judges here, you do a lot of sitting if you go on the bench. Judge Johnson, I discovered, likes to get up early—it must have been her Louisiana upbringing, and because of my ranch background, I get up early—and so I started an exercise class at the Supreme Court soon after I got here, and guess who I got to participate? Judge Johnson, because I like to get a number of people in the class. You see, when you exercise, if you have to do it all by yourself, you just don't do it, and you need other people to suffer along with you.

(Laughter.)

ASSOCIATE JUSTICE O'CONNOR: You really become friends when you're both straining to do 30 pushups and 50 leg lifts, and so on, together. Really, we formed a friendship in that process, and I felt a terrible loss when Judge Johnson's hip gave way and she had to stop coming to the exercise class. But it didn't stop our friendship.

I have always admired Judge Johnson's path in the legal profession. Upon coming to the District of Columbia from Louisiana as a young woman, she went to the D.C. Teacher's College, became a school teacher, and actually taught in the public schools here for some years while putting herself through night law school at Georgetown. Now, that kind of a thing gets my attention every time. That's very impressive to do.

After getting out of law school, she was in private practice for a year, and about that time married her fabulous husband, Judge Julius Johnson here, in 1964, something like that. Then Judge Johnson became a trial attorney for the Department of Justice for four years, and then Assistant Corporation Counsel for the District of Columbia for three years.

With that really great background, she was appointed to the Superior Court here in the District of Columbia in 1970 and for ten years as a judge on that court, and then on the Federal District Court, as I said, in 1980. After serving in that capacity for a long time, she became chief judge of this court for almost four years.

Throughout her service on the District Court, both as judge and then chief judge, she handled some exceedingly challenging cases, both civil and criminal, on this court, and now she's finally enjoying a bit more relaxed senior status.

Judge Johnson has been an active and a very helpful member of many professional organizations, such as the William Bryant Inn of Court, where I have been privileged to see her; the National Association of Women Judges, where I have been privileged to join her; the Federal Judges Association; the National Bar Association; the American Bar Foundation, and so on.

Now, today, we're going to see a portrait unveil. I love doing that, don't you? It's all covered up over there, and you don't know what's under it and what the portrait is going to be. But there is a good artist, so I hope it's going to be great. I hope that we will see in this portrait evidence of Judge Johnson's understanding of people, a glimpse of her friendliness, and a portrait of her intelligence, and her wide legal experience, and her dignity as a judge of this very important court. I hope to see a fine portrait of my cherished friend, Norma Holloway Johnson.

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Thank you for the opportunity to be here today and to share this time in paying tribute to your really remarkable career in the legal profession, and your encouragement of others to walk in your path.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHIEF JUDGE HOGAN: Thank you so much, Justice O'Connor. We deeply appreciate you coming down to our court.

Our next speaker is a former United States Attorney for the District of Columbia, Wilma A. Lewis.

Ms. Lewis.

MS. LEWIS: May it please the Court. Chief Judge Hogan, our honoree, the Honorable Norma Holloway Johnson, other honorable judges of the federal and local courts of the District of Columbia, Justice O'Connor, the Honorable Julius Johnson, other distinguished guests, colleagues, relatives and friends of Judge Johnson, good afternoon.

I am most honored to be part of this wonderful celebration for a judge for whom I have the utmost respect and admiration, the Honorable Norma Holloway Johnson.

Thank you, Judge Johnson, for your gracious invitation and, indeed, for the great privilege of not only witnessing but participating in this very special ceremony. My congratulations to you on the unveiling of your portrait, an honor so very well deserved. A proud moment for all of us, and a lasting tribute to the invaluable contributions that you through your public service have etched into the annals of history.

As I reflected on my almost 18 years since I have known Judge Johnson, I couldn't help but pause and smile as I recalled what I believed was our very first real interaction. It was an indoctrination of sorts.

It was back in about March of 1986, within weeks after I had joined the United States Attorney's Office as an assistant in the Civil Division. I know that both Judge Lamberth and Judge Bates are familiar with those days in the Civil Division.

In any event, I appeared before Judge Johnson for a status conference in one of the cases to which I had been assigned. As we got to the point in the status conference for setting the trial date, Judge Johnson looked at her calendar and suggested that the trial be scheduled for around the middle of August. While I don't remember the exact date, let's say August 15th.

Recognizing that I already had a trial scheduled for around the beginning of August and one as well toward the end of August, I thought it might be a bit much to have yet a third trial in August, this one now scheduled for the middle of the month. Accordingly, I respectfully informed Judge Johnson of my plight, and I inquired whether the trial could be scheduled for around the middle of September or thereabouts. Judge Johnson looked at me—over her glasses, of course—and with that look with which we are all so familiar, she said, "Ms. Lewis, you're new in the U.S. Attorney's Office, aren't you?"

(Laughter.)

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MS. LEWIS: I responded proudly, "Yes, Your Honor, I am. I've been here for about six weeks or so."

Judge Johnson then replied, "You'll see, Ms. Lewis, things get a bit tough in the United States Attorney's Office. Trial scheduled August 15th."

(Laughter.)

MS. LEWIS: Fortunately, I collected myself sufficient to end the status conference respectfully.

Incidentally, Judge Johnson was right, things did get pretty tough in the U.S. Attorney's Office. But, more importantly, the message that I received from her that day was very, very clear. As far as Judge Johnson was concerned, when the going gets tough, the tough don't go shopping, as in that t-shirt that I have seen often with that saying emblazoned on it. There would be no shopping for me. For Judge Johnson, when the going gets tough, the tough get to work. And although unspoken, the tone in her voice and the look on her face made it equally clear that she was expecting a performance of the highest quality. But to those who know Judge Johnson, this should come as no surprise for she is a veritable trailblazer known, among other things, for her hard work, her high standards, her firm but fair hand, and her dedication to the administration of justice.

Blessed with a talent that was recognized from her early years as a lawyer, she was one of only two female judges appointed by President Richard Nixon to an associate judge position of the then newly created Superior Court of the District of Columbia, an achievement accomplished only eight years after graduation from law school. Then, less than two decades following her graduation from law school, she was appointed by President Jimmy Carter as a United States District Judge, becoming the first African-American woman appointed to the Federal Bench in the District of Columbia, and ultimately rising, after 17 years of illustrious service, to be the first African-American woman to serve as chief judge of this court.

I had the great privilege of being sworn in as U.S. Attorney by Judge Johnson and serving in that capacity during the period when Judge Johnson served as the chief judge of this court. From that vantage point, it was easy for me to see the many admirable qualities that I believe are characteristic of Judge Johnson—most notably, her leadership, her integrity, her sound judgment, and her passion for justice. And through it all, and notwithstanding the many challenges of her high office, she has always brought a graciousness, a dignity, and a sense of decorum to every proceeding over which she has presided, and I mean every proceeding.

I recall so well when I was planning the investiture as United States Attorney. I was in constant contact with Judge Johnson to determine with her and to plan with her what would transpire at those proceedings. I recall asking her if it would be okay for me to have a couple of photographers. She said, "Wilma, you can have your photographers, but you'd better make sure that they're not prancing around my courtroom."

(Laughter.)

MS. LEWIS: So take heed. Please stay where you are.

(Laughter.)

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MS. LEWIS: At every proceeding, there was a decorum, a dignity, and a respect for every proceeding over which Judge Johnson presided.

The Daily Washington Law Reporter aptly described Judge Johnson as having a ground-breaking legal career, and we have all been the beneficiaries—our bench, our bar, our community, and, indeed, our nation. I will always be proud to walk into this courtroom and to see Judge Johnson's portrait hanging from these walls. The hanging of her portrait is a fitting tribute to her and should serve as a constant reminder to all of us of the very high standards in our noble profession that should always be our guide.

Thank you and congratulations.

(Applause.)

CHIEF JUDGE HOGAN: Thank you so much, Ms. Lewis.

We can see why Ms. Lewis was the United States Attorney.

Next will be Michael Madigan, from the law firm Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld.

Mr. Madigan.

MR. MADIGAN: May it please the Court. Chief Judge Hogan, Judges of the court, Chief Judge Johnson, Judge Julius Johnson, Justice O'Connor, family and friends, good afternoon.

I am very honored to have this opportunity to say a few words about an outstanding and courageous judge. I have known the chief judge and Julius now for over 30 years, dating back to the days when Julius and I were federal prosecutors and football teammates together. The only problem is that Julius is now in better shape and faster than he was in the seventies, while my time in the hundred today is best calculated on a sundial.

(Laughter.)

MR. MADIGAN: When you look back at the 40-year career of Chief Judge Johnson, you may remember that it began as a young girl born in the South, in Lake Charles, Louisiana, who lived through some of the most difficult times in the history of our country. Through all of it she persevered, grew and succeeded. In her retirement I have no doubt that she will remain active, as even today as a country we have a lot more work to do.

I won't go through all of the accomplishments of Chief Judge Johnson in her career. I am here to tell you this afternoon, however, that she was one terrific trial judge. I particularly remember one trial that I had before her. My opposing counsel happened to be a young lawyer who was trying his first case and was making the mistakes that a young lawyer does. Judge Johnson was firm and fair throughout the trial, as exemplified by a bench conference that we had where she called everyone up to the bench and said to the young lawyer, "Now, Mr. So-and-So, do you really want to ask those questions? I think you may be hurting your case." The young lawyer allowed as his client was insisting that he ask those questions, and the judge just looked at him over the top of her glasses and said, "Try your case, young man."

That short story exemplifies the kind of judge Chief Judge Johnson was, firm but fair, letting the lawyers try their cases, but always insisting, always insisting

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upon decorum and respect in the courtroom, judging, I would submit, as it should be.

Chief Judge Johnson, as all of you know, has had many important and difficult cases throughout her judicial career. We don't have time this afternoon to name them all, but they range from the Rostenkowski case to the historic Graham-Rudman ruling to important fair labor standards cases. She always called them as she saw them.

In her later years on the bench, it fell to this chief judge to preside over this court during the difficult years surrounding the investigation and impeachment process of President Clinton. Through it all she stood tall, deciding on the merits some of the most difficult and novel cases ever filed, such as the Secret Service privilege, the White House counsel privilege, the Vince Foster case, and many others. When this court became embroiled in a politically charged investigation which presented substantial separation of powers issues affecting all judges in all courts, I could not be more proud of the way she handled the proceedings with grace and dignity, and at the end of the day the truth prevailed.

As the father of a daughter who will graduate in a few months from Georgetown Law School, I cannot think of a better role model for her than Chief Judge Johnson. With such an outstanding judicial career now complete, Norma and Julius can enjoy life and what it has to offer in their senior years, but both will no doubt continue to be involved in the important issues facing this city and its citizens. Washington is fortunate, indeed, to have such an outstanding couple in our midst, and today we gather to wish them much happiness in the years ahead.

God bless.

(Applause.)

CHIEF JUDGE HOGAN: Thank you, Mr. Madigan.

Our next speaker is going to be Ms. Beverly Burke, former law clerk to Judge Johnson.

Ms. Burke.

MS. BURKE: Good afternoon, Chief Judge Hogan, other members of the bench, honored guests, Chief Judge Johnson, Judge Johnson.

I am very grateful to have the opportunity today to be here to give remarks about a woman who has made such a difference in my life. In searching for the right things to say, I decided rather than focus on the many, many accomplishments of this great woman, accomplishments that are well known and have been recited to some degree here today, that I instead will share with you a more personal view of what Judge Johnson has meant to me, and I am sure to others as well.

First, let me say that being the fourth speaker is always a challenge to know whether or not the things that you would seek to say will already have been said by the time I get up here; however, there are so many superlatives to describe Chief Judge Johnson that it may take a courtroom full of speakers in order to cover all the many wonderful traits that she has.

When we look back upon our careers, each of us can recall a few moments that were more or less turning points for us, those one or two special times when we knew, just knew that something significant had occurred. One such moment for me

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was when, as a soon-to-be graduate of law school—and I'm not going to give you the date—I received a telephone call from the judge's secretary asking me to come in again to speak with the judge. I say "again" because, much to my chagrin, she had made initially another choice as a law clerk. However, for some reason that choice had fallen through and, much to my delight, she wanted to know if I would still be interested in the position. His loss, my gain.

So I started my career with the coveted position of a judicial clerkship. Little did I know then what I know now, that it would be one of the greatest experiences of my life. My association with her has been a guiding light to me for many years, for during that wonderful time with her she not only shared her considerable insights into the application of the law to facts, she shared her thought processes as well—what impressed her, what persuaded her, what behavior in lawyers she found either admirable or troublesome.

When I subsequently pursued the path of litigation in the Office of the Corporation Counsel, and then later with the corporation Washington Gas, there was rarely a time when I didn't ask myself: "What would Judge Johnson think about this particular course of action? What would Judge Johnson do?"

In addition to the wonderful legal education that I received from her, Judge Johnson also shared her engaging personality, her time, and the secrets of her successful career. What a wonderful education that was as well. Those who have had the benefit of being one of her law clerks know what it is like becoming a member of her family. She has given much of herself to legal and other organizations, and has provided unselfish support to many young people starting their careers.

Judge Johnson, you have been my inspiration, my mentor, my role model. You have taught me how to be in control without being controlling. You have taught me grace under pressure and courage under fire. You have demonstrated to all close enough to see your dignity, your perseverance, your humility and your sense of honor, and for this, I am very grateful.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHIEF JUDGE HOGAN: Thank you so much, Ms. Burke.

Our final speaker will be Mr. Matt Olsen, former law clerk, and currently an Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Columbia.

Mr. Olsen.

MR. OLSEN: Thank you, Your Honor. May it please the Court. It is an honor to be here on this wonderful occasion and to say a few words on behalf of all of Judge Johnson's law clerks.

I remember when I first started clerking for Judge Johnson. I sat in Judge Johnson's courtroom, along with my co-clerk Hillary, and watched the judge conduct a sentencing hearing. The defendant in that case had embezzled millions of dollars from the Federal Government. He was a government employee. Judge Johnson, as she proceeded to announce her sentence, looked at the defendant with that trademark stare that a number of us have now commented on, and she raised her finger and she slowly shook it, and she proceeded to express her outrage at the defendant's conduct. She talked about the trust that he had breached, the harm that

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he had caused. She was courageous, and her words were filled with the courage that she felt, and they were unyielding as she expressed her outrage.

As I sat there listening, all I felt was fear—not fear for the defendant, but fear for me because I saw myself. As I sat there, I imagined myself in the defendant's shoes.

(Laughter.)

MR. OLSEN: What if I didn't find the case on point?

(Laughter.)

MR. OLSEN: What if I failed or forgot to fill the courtroom pitchers up with water one morning?

(Laughter.)

MR. OLSEN: How was I possibly going to live up to Judge Johnson's expectations? The only thing I knew for sure was that there was no way that I could survive having Judge Johnson talk to me like that.

(Laughter.)

MR. OLSEN: Well, fortunately for those of us who have been privileged enough to serve as a law clerk to Judge Johnson, and many of us are here today, we quickly learned that behind her formal and sometimes intimidating courtroom demeanor, Judge Johnson is just about the most caring person you could imagine. She treats the people around her with warmth and affection, and she treated her law clerks like we were a part of her family. She always took a particular interest in the personal lives of her law clerks. She advised us on our careers. She got to know our families and our friends. She even brought her intellect and her natural curiosity to bear on decisions that we made regarding romantic relations.

(Laughter.)

MR. OLSEN: As Judge Johnson said and has said, "Remember, the judge is always right," and I don't know when she said that that she was limiting herself to judgments that she made from the bench.

(Laughter.)

MR. OLSEN: And, of course, Judge Johnson has taken a special particular interest in the children of her law clerks. I heard her call them her grandclerks. We have taken enormous pride in bringing our children in to meet the judge, almost as if we were bringing to her the ultimate research memo.

(Laughter.)

MR. OLSEN: The soft side of Judge Johnson could be seen in many other ways in the way she treats the people that she encounters every day.

When I was clerking for Judge Johnson—it was around this time of year, around Christmastime—one of the cleaning people in the courthouse came by to see Judge Johnson. Judge Johnson, of course, knew her name. She knows everybody's name. But on this particular occasion the cleaning person brought along her daughter, who was about 12 years old. Judge Johnson invited the cleaning person and her daughter into her chambers, and she spent about a half-an-hour talking to them. In particular, she had many questions for this 12-year-old girl: "Where do you

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go to school? What classes are you taking? What are your favorite subjects?" As she got toward the end of that conversation, I remember Judge Johnson got very serious and told this 12-year-old girl to study very hard, and that if she did, she could be whatever she wanted to be. It was that brief encounter, I think, that reflects the true nature of Judge Johnson. I don't know what ever happened to that young girl, but I am certain that she has never forgotten that conversation with the judge.

So that is the so-called secret that, of course, everyone in here knows, that Judge Johnson can strike fear in the heart of the most seasoned trial lawyer, or the most hardened criminal, or a rookie law clerk. In fact, at the U.S. Attorney's Office, whole training sessions are devoted to living up to the standards of Judge Johnson's courtroom for decorum and civility. But beneath that formal exterior, Judge Johnson is overflowing with warmth and compassion for the people around here.

We've heard today about all of Judge Johnson's accomplishments and her truly remarkable and ground-breaking career, her excellence as a jurist, her contribution and enduring legacy to the court and to this courthouse, and as formal law clerks we have had just the incredible experience of being present for a year or two during those 33 years on the bench, and we have learned so much during that time from Judge Johnson, and in the years since we have continued to rely on her wisdom and counsel. But beyond that, it is the personal relationship that we have had with the judge that has meant the most and that we treasure most of all. Judge Johnson has been so much more than just an employer or even just a mentor to us. We thought we were signing on for a year or two of an apprenticeship with a Federal Judge and, in fact, Judge Johnson was bringing us in to be a part of a lifetime of shared experiences.

Judge Johnson, on behalf of all of your law clerks, we love and admire you, and we thank you so much for making us a part of your extraordinary life. Thank you.

(Applause.)

CHIEF JUDGE HOGAN: Thank you, Mr. Olsen, for those fine remarks, and I want to thank all of the speakers for the wonderful remarks today capturing Judge Johnson.

Now, presenting the portrait today on behalf of Judge Johnson's former law clerks are Ms. Anne LaLonde and Mr. James Beane, Jr.

Would you please step forward.

MR. BEANE: May it please the Court. Good afternoon, Judge Johnson.

I would first like to say to Judge Johnson thank you for this wonderful opportunity. It's been a great experience.

I am going to present to the judge a gift from all her former law clerks, but first I want to express our appreciation for all that you have done for us. We don't mean just the opportunity you've given us to be your law clerks—that was an awesome opportunity—but what I'm talking about are the intangibles: your wisdom that you've passed on to us; your strength of spirit that we've grown from; your patience—like Matt said, about being frightened that you might come after us. We appreciate you being patient with us. But, more importantly, we appreciate the inspiration that you've given us to be better than we are.

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Many of you know that Monday was the 50th anniversary of the oral arguments in *Brown v. Board of Education*. In listening to an NPR program regarding that, I heard stories about families in the State of Louisiana, where the judge is from, who struggled to get their children educated. The system in Louisiana was in such a state of disrepair that some parents actually had to send their children away, to the North or out West, in order to get a decent education for their children. That's the type of school system that Judge Johnson fought her way through to become a Federal Judge. That just amazes me. When I look back on my youth and all the opportunities I had, I just squandered them away.

(Laughter.)

MR. BEANE: I look at my current position and I am a little disappointed that I haven't done more, but thanks to Judge Johnson I'm inspired to work harder and to become better than I am. All of her clerks would like to thank you for that. With that, we would like to present you with this portrait of all your law clerks and their families, and that one of their children.

(Applause.)

MS. LaLONDE: I would just like to add it was just an extraordinary privilege to have had the opportunity to work for Judge Johnson, and thank you for sharing your warmth with us, and thank you for sharing your king cake with us at Mardi Gras. I would always remember that every Mardi Gras. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

CHIEF JUDGE HOGAN: Judge Julius Johnson, if Judge Johnson would unveil the portrait at this time.

JUDGE JULIUS JOHNSON: May it please the court. Chief Judge Hogan, Justice O'Connor, Judges, family, friends, it is my special privilege to unveil the portrait, but beforehand I would like to say a few words about the artist.

Simmie Knox is a honor graduate of Temple University, where he received the Bachelor of Arts degree in fine arts, and also the Master's degree in fine arts. He has taught at various colleges and universities, and public schools in the District of Columbia, Delaware, Pennsylvania and Maryland. He is quite an outstanding artist, and he has painted in various media; however, he focuses on painting portraits. His reason for that is that portrait painting presents a greater challenge in capturing the character, the spirit, and the personality of the subject.

When I first met Mr. Knox in January of this year, I readily perceived that he was a man of keen intellect, keen perception. I also sensed that he was a man of deep contemplation.

Some months after meeting him, I was concerned about the progress of his work. I thought several times of calling him, and then I thought, well, you do not disturb an artist in the undertaking of painting a portrait, work so delicate. I did not call. I simply said: Mr. Knox is working or he is thinking. I thought of another master painter in the 16th Century. He would sit for days and weeks and months before a blank canvas, brush in hand. When asked why he would sit so long without painting, his reply was: Painting itself is a mechanical act. The challenge is in the contemplation of the subject. I'm not so sure that Mr. Knox has had the luxury, as busy as he has been, to sit for days, weeks, and months before an empty canvas with

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brush in hand. I do believe he is engaged in deep contemplation. I do believe that this portrait, for whatever time it might have taken, succeeds in showing the character, the spirit, and personality of the judge.

I would ask Mr. Knox, if he would, please come up and assist me with the unveiling.

(Unveiling of the portrait.)

(Applause.)

CHIEF JUDGE HOGAN: We thank you very much, Judge Johnson. We are very excited to have this portrait, and we thank Mr. Knox for creating such a remarkable portrait.

I would like to say a few words before we give Judge Johnson and Judge Julius Johnson a chance to respond, if they would like.

Thank you for turning that around. That's a beautiful portrait.

Norma and I have served over 21 years together on this court, and she has always been an inspiration to me. As a young judge, I came here and she was extremely helpful. She always had her door open for me, always had time to talk to me.

In her career here, as you have heard, she has taken on some of the most difficult cases, and she has handled them with exceptional brilliance. I remember talking to a Court of Appeals judge, and they aren't always our favorite people sometimes, and one of them said to me, "We really like reading the transcripts of Judge Johnson's trials, she speaks so well and articulately." I think we all know that if we have dealt with Judge Johnson.

As my immediate predecessor as Chief Judge, I have a firsthand appreciation for the tremendous work she has done on behalf of this court in her almost six years. Her legacy will carry on for many years to come as Chief Judge. She's struggled through, as we have heard, some of the most challenging issues of our day that I think were ever brought before a chief judge, cases that were constantly appealed and went to the Supreme Court, and Judge Johnson was ultimately almost always upheld.

Norma is retiring at the end of the year, but retiring is a difficult word to apply to Judge Johnson. We commend Norma for everything she has done for all of us. She has been one of our shining stars, and we will remember all the work she has done for us in the future. We wish her and her family the best in the coming years, and we know she will be coming down to see us and visit with us. We will miss her greatly.

I would like to thank Judge Johnson's law clerks for this splendid portrait and this gift. We gratefully accept it on behalf of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. This portrait will be hung here in this room. It will be joined with the other distinguished jurists who have had the honor of serving on what I and I think many of us feel and believe is one of the most important courts in this country.

I believe Judge Julius Johnson would like to say a few more words at this time, and then Judge Norma Holloway Johnson would like to address the court.

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JUDGE JULIUS JOHNSON: Thank you, Chief Judge Hogan. I simply wanted to say, since this is the last day, perhaps, that the judge will be sitting with her colleagues in this hallowed courtroom, what a pleasure it has been. She has allowed me this privilege, I suppose, as a spouse of 39 years and her partner, to make just a few comments in closing.

It is said that there is a time we may not know when, there is a place we may not know where that mark our destiny from all the events of life. I believe there were two events, really, that might have marked the course for this judge. One event was before her legal career, the second one was, perhaps, at the beginning of it.

The first event, the time was when the judge was 12 years old. The place was Lake Charles, Louisiana. As some previous speakers have already referred, she started life in a very rural community, being raised by a mother, with her brother, in a modest home. She began working at the age of 12, by putting up her age, making \$9 a week, which is more than twice as much as her mother made in full-time employment.

There came a time when she left Louisiana and came to Washington to stay with an aging aunt. When that aunt died, she had the good fortune to be taken in by the family of Thelma and Costello Bell, who treated her just like they did their own daughter, Barbara. Barbara Bell, now Mrs. Clark, and Norma attended high school and Teacher's College together. I should mention that, fortunately, Mrs. Thelma Bell and Mrs. Katherine Tignor were sisters, so Norma, in effect, became a member of two solid Washington families.

Well, the story has been told already of her going to school, but I should mention that it was during the years that she was teaching that she was impressed by the 1954 Supreme Court decision which has already been referred to, the case of *Brown v. Board of Education*, the school desegregation case, and this teacher dreamed of becoming a lawyer. She became a lawyer, and she became a judge. She never forgot her humble, hardworking mother, and she never forgot that she was a little girl from Lake Charles, Louisiana.

The second event, the time was about 1963. The place was a courtroom in this courthouse. As an attorney for the Department of Justice, she came to the courtroom to handle one of her first civil cases. When the case was called, the chief judge, who was then presiding some 40 years ago, turned her away. He would not allow her to enter the well of the court. The fact that she was a member of the bar and represented the government of the United States was insufficient to overcome the combination of her ethnic qualities and her gender. Another attorney from the Department of Justice had to be called to take over the case.

She took from this experience neither shame nor sorrow, but a determination to fulfill herself as a lawyer, and that she did. She worked hard in all of her positions and, as you have heard, she became the judge. I think it is some irony that through the noble act of President Carter in 1980, she was appointed to the very court where she had been barred from practicing. I think it is some irony, too, that through the noble act of Chief Judge John Penn, now senior judge, she should have the opportunity herself of becoming chief judge, thereby occupying the very position of a much earlier predecessor who would deny her a court appearance.

## HONORABLE NORMA HOLLOWAY JOHNSON

I think we would all agree that she had quite an extraordinary career, and I think you might wonder, in the 23 years she has served on this Federal Court, if there might have been any regrets, and I would say, no, not really, but then I would say perhaps one. Her experience has been so singular and so unique. No other woman sharing her identify in this enlightened time and in this historic place has shared her honor of serving on this court, nor is it foreseeable that one will as important as this court is.

This is a court sitting here in the Nation's Capital. This is a court standing in the light of the White House, the Congress and the Supreme Court. This is a court lying here in the heart of a local, diverse community of highly capable lawyers and judges, including women of color. Her experience need not have been so singular or unique, nor need it remain so.

As we look around this courtroom, we can feel awe and aspiration gazing upon the countenance of distinguished jurists. They represent the past. They represent a long procession of over 200 years to this day. As the portrait of Judge Holloway joins the portraits of these distinguished judges, it is hoped that hers, like theirs, will be a reminder of all that has gone before. It is hoped, too, that her portrait, like theirs, will be a reminder of all that is yet to be.

(Applause.)

JUDGE NORMA HOLLOWAY JOHNSON: Thank you. I express to you my deepest appreciation for coming today for this portrait presentation. Your being here, I feel, is the most heartwarming testament to the career I have been fortunate to have in public service. It is a testament also to the importance of this court in this Nation's Capital and in our community. I appreciate the reception of the portrait. It symbolizes the tenure of 23 years that I have been privileged to serve on this court. It also symbolizes the culmination of a task as a Federal Judge that has been satisfying, meaningful and rewarding in many, many ways.

I was fortunate to have been appointed to this historic court by President Carter, who undertook an unprecedented act in entrusting in me the obligation to uphold the principles and perform the duties of this high office. For his faith and his courage I shall always be grateful.

I also express appreciation today to our speakers for their kind and eloquent tributes. Justice O'Connor was among the first to extend the warm and gracious hand of friendship after I became a Federal Judge. I will always remember our early morning exercise sessions before rushing off to an arduous and long day of trial work. I shall always cherish the memory of those days and our long friendship over these many years.

Appreciation is also expressed to Wilma Lewis, with whom I have had the pleasure of working in her distinguished and distinctive role of United States Attorney.

Michael Madigan, for his astute advocacy and good counsel when they were sorely needed. Thank you, Mike.

Beverly Burke and Matt Olsen, who were such dedicated law clerks and who, as outstanding attorneys, now are fulfilling the promise I always knew you possessed.

## PRESENTATION OF PORTRAIT

I thank Anne LaLonde and James Beane for their thoughtful tribute. They, like Anna Cramer and Amanda Rocque, who initiated the undertaking for the preparation, are representative of all the former law clerks who have been so devoted. I would ask all of my former and present law clerks to stand as I acknowledge in gratitude your dedication. Please stand, my present and former law clerks.

(Applause.)

JUDGE NORMA HOLLOWAY JOHNSON: Thank you so much again for your dedication and your service.

I would also like to publicly acknowledge at this time my faithful secretary, administrative assistant, and office manager and everything else that I have needed to perform this duty, Ms. Mary Edmondson. Would you please stand. Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

JUDGE NORMA HOLLOWAY JOHNSON: Mary has been central to every task that I have had to perform, and she has been invaluable in ways I could never count.

I express appreciation to the many fine individuals in the offices and services of the Clerk of Court, to the Probation Office, to the United States Marshal's Office, and to the Court Security Office. These are the men and women, often seen or unseen, who have given daily support and assistance to the judges of this court, and have aided us in carrying out our many responsibilities.

I express appreciation to Chief Judge Hogan for his insight and understanding during the time I was facing the difficult decision regarding my retirement.

Lastly, I express my deepest appreciation to my colleagues on this bench with whom I have had the pleasure of serving in the challenging and exciting work of this court. I shall miss the experiences I have enjoyed for so many years at this the greatest court in the United States. Thank you so much for all that you have done for me.

(Applause.)

CHIEF JUDGE HOGAN: Ladies and gentlemen, you can see why we're going to miss Judge Johnson.

At the conclusion of this ceremony, there is a reception on the fifth floor in the main hallway of this courthouse, and all of you are welcome to join Judge Johnson, her family, and her friends on this very special and wonderful occasion.

Now, before we adjourn, I would ask the audience to please refrain from entering the well of the court until the judges have had an opportunity to congratulate Judge Johnson and her family. With respect to everyone else, you are asked to adjourn to the reception so Judge Johnson can meet you there. Again, we thank you for joining us.

I did not want to be remiss, and I want to pass on Judge Penn's congratulations and best wishes as well. He called me just before we came in today, and he has been confined at home by his doctor and is not allowed to come today. He very much wanted to be here, and he is sorry he had to miss it.

Again, we thank you all for joining us for the speakers today.

HONORABLE NORMA HOLLOWAY JOHNSON

Marshal, please adjourn the court in honor of Judge Johnson.

DEPUTY MARSHAL ROBESON: All rise. The Honorable United States District Court in and for the District of Columbia now stands adjourned.

(Whereupon, the proceedings in the above-entitled matter were concluded at 5:07 p.m.)

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