



## Supreme Court of Illinois

December 2, 2021

### **JUSTICE MARY JANE THEIS ANNOUNCES NEW MEMBERS OF JUDICIAL SCREENING COMMITTEE**

Illinois Supreme Court Justice Mary Jane Theis announced today the addition of new members to her Judicial Screening Committee.

The screening committee was formed for the purpose of assessing the qualifications of those persons who have applied for appointment to the Office of Judge of the Circuit Court for Cook County. The committee is currently reviewing candidates for vacancies created by the retirements of Judge Joan O'Brien and Judge Sharon Sullivan. Under the Illinois constitution, the vacancies will be filled by Supreme Court appointment.

"I welcome the new members and thank them for their service," Justice Theis said. "It is important to have a diverse committee to reflect the community we serve."

After the committee has received public input, gathered information, and interviewed each of the applicants, it will report its findings to the Illinois Supreme Court, which will make the appointments from the applicants who have been screened by the committee. The persons appointed will serve as a judge of the Circuit Court until the general election to be held in November 2022.

The new members of the screening committee are Co-Chair Patricia Brown Holmes, Leynee Cruz Flores, James Botana, and John Gallo. The returning members of the committee are Co-Chair Hon. Wayne R. Andersen (Ret.), the Hon. David Coar (Ret.), Mary Dempsey, Denise Kane, Beth Kaveny, Mike Monico, Michael Rothstein, Sister Cathy Ryan, Richard Waris, and Mark Wojcik.

The Hon. Patricia Brown Holmes is a former Cook County Associate Judge of nine years who is currently Managing Partner at Riley Safer Holmes & Cancila LLP (RSHP), where she is "the first African-American woman to lead and have her name on the door of a major law firm that is not women-or minority-owned," according to RSHP.

She previously served as Chief Assistant Corporation Counsel for Municipal Prosecutions for the City of Chicago as well as an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois and an Assistant State's Attorney for Cook County. She served as President of the Chicago Bar Association from 2015-2016. Her honors include being named Person of the Year for 2016 by Chicago Lawyer and receiving the Ida B. Platt Award in 2018 from the Cook County Bar Association. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and her *Juris Doctor* from the University of Illinois College of Law.

The Hon. Patricia Brown Holmes serves as co-chair along with the Hon. Wayne R. Andersen, a former U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois and Cook County Circuit Court Judge who has worked at JAMS since 2010.

James Botana is the Principal at Jackson Lewis P.C.'s Chicago office, where he started working in 2000. In this role he represents management in employment cases in federal and state courts, and before administrative agencies in a variety of employment and labor related claims. He also currently serves as a Special Assistant Corporation Counsel representing the City of Chicago and has served on the Illinois State Advisory Committee (SAC) of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

Mr. Botana was named Latino Lawyer of the Year by the Hispanic Lawyers Association of Illinois in 2020. He earned his Bachelor of Science, *magna cum laude*, from the Chicago State University and his *Juris Doctor* from the DePaul University College of Law.

Leynee Cruz Flores is a Partner at Golan Christie Taglia, LLP, since July 2021. She previously was a Principal at Chuhak & Tecson, P.C., with additional experience at Ruben M. Garcia & Associates and Zamora & Hillman. She is the Immediate Past President of the Hispanic Lawyers Association of Illinois. She earned her Bachelor's in Public Administration from Florida International University and her *Juris Doctor* at the St. Thomas University College of Law.

John Gallo is the Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director of Legal Aid Chicago, a role he has held since 2017. Prior to joining Legal Aid, he was a partner at Sidley Austin LLP for 21 years, where he served as Head of Litigation in the Chicago office from 2014 to 2017. In 2005, Mr. Gallo created Sidley's Capital Litigation Project to provide legal representation to inmates on Alabama's death row. Before joining Sidley Austin, Mr. Gallo spent seven years as a Criminal Assistant United States Attorney in the Northern District of Illinois.

Mr. Gallo additionally served as Trial Counsel to the Illinois Judicial Inquiry Board from 2000 to 2017 and was the recipient of the Pro Bono Publico Award by the American Bar Association in 2007. He earned his Bachelor of Arts from the University of Notre Dame and his *Juris Doctor* from the Harvard Law School. He has served as an Adjunct Professor at the Notre Dame Law School since 2002.