

MISSOURI'S BLACK JUDICIAL PIONEERS:
LEADING AND PRESIDING

Hon. Willie J. Epps, Jr.* and Jonathan M. Warren**

ABSTRACT

In this Article, Judge Epps and Jonathan Warren collect and compose an unparalleled amount of information about Missouri's Black judges from 1922 to the present. Laser-focused on barrier-breaking judges, this Article offers insights about the most well-known Black judges, in addition to details about lesser-known Black judges. According to the authors, the earliest of these judicial pioneers wore the black robe when Blacks had few or no rights under the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Constitution, and when de jure and de facto discrimination reigned in Missouri and throughout the country. The authors' research shows how Black judges overcame prejudice within the profession. This scholarship illuminates generations of Black Missouri judges who initiated progress within and have left an impactful legacy on the judiciary.

* United States Magistrate Judge for the Western District of Missouri.

** Associate, McGuireWoods, Charlotte, North Carolina. Former law clerk to Judge J. Michelle Childs, United States District Court for the District of South Carolina, and Judge Epps. The authors wish to thank Judges Duane Benton, Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr., Jon R. Gray, Lisa White Hardwick, Sandra Farragut-Hemphill, Kathy Surrat-States, and Angela Turner Quigless for their generous comments on earlier drafts. We thank Kathryn Winfrey, branch librarian, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit, for her invaluable assistance in researching Missouri's Black judicial pioneers. We gratefully acknowledge the substantial assistance of Professor Karen Tokarz, Mischa Buford Epps, and Madison Warren. This Article is adapted from Judge Epps' *Black Lawyers of Missouri: 150 Years of Progress and Promise*, 86 MO. L. REV. 1 (2021).

INTRODUCTION

The professional and social standing of Black judges across Missouri has progressed substantially since the origin of the Mound City Bar Association one hundred years ago. Today, Black judges occupy important and prestigious judgeships throughout the State. A Black St. Louis judge just completed a two-year term as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Missouri, only the second Black to lead the Missouri State courts.¹ Another Black St. Louis judge currently sits on the State's highest court—the first Black woman to do so—marking the first time in the State's two hundred year history that two Blacks have served together there (28.5% of the Supreme Court bench).² Two Black women serve on the Missouri Court of Appeals (6.2% of the intermediate appellate bench).³ Blacks hold 19 of the 384 state trial judgeships (4.9% of the circuit court bench).⁴ Black men and

1. Judge George W. Draper, III was the second African American to lead the State's highest Court. *Judge George W. Draper III*, MO. CTS., <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=50536> (last visited June 1, 2021). Judge Ronnie L. White, Sr. was the first. *Judge Ronnie L. White*, MO. CTS., <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=204> (last visited June 1, 2021). Chris King, *Judge George Draper is Newest Chief Justice of Missouri*, ST. LOUIS PUB. RADIO (July 1, 2019, 10:09 AM), <https://news.stlpublicradio.org/government-politics-issues/2019-07-01/judge-george-draper-is-newest-chief-justice-of-missouri#stream/0> [<https://perma.cc/7YAH-6F28>].

2. Kurt Erickson, *For the First Time, a Black Woman Will Serve on the Missouri Supreme Court*, ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH (May 25, 2021), https://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/for-the-first-time-a-black-woman-will-serve-on-the-missouri-supreme-court/article_0032a8c9-c293-55d9-9c29-c64f1541b16a.html [<https://perma.cc/5VGG-JCP5>]. Among the seven judges on the Supreme Court, two (28%) are Black. *Supreme Court Judges*, MO. CTS., <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=133> (last visited July 1, 2021).

3. Judges Lisa White Hardwick and Angela Turner Quigless. See *Meet Your Judges: The Judges of the Western Appellate District*, MO. CTS., <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=229> (last visited July 2, 2021); *Meet Your Judges: The Judges of the Eastern Appellate District*, MO. CTS., <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=134> (last visited July 2, 2021). Among the fourteen judges on the Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, one (7%) is Black: Judge Quigless. *Meet Your Judges: The Judges of the Eastern Appellate District*, MO. CTS., <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=134> (last visited June 1, 2021). Among the eleven judges on the Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District, one (9%) is Black: Judge Hardwick. *Meet Your Judges: The Judges of the Western Appellate District*, MO. CTS., <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=229> (last visited Oct. 7, 2021). Among the seven judges on the Missouri Court of Appeals, Southern District, none are Black. *Meet Your Judges: The Judges of the Southern Appellate District*, MO. CTS., <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=212> (last visited July 1, 2021).

4. Missouri circuit courts are comprised of circuit judges, associate circuit judges, and commissioners. "Missouri has 423 judges and commissioners. There are seven Supreme Court judges and 32 appellate judges on the three geographic districts of the intermediate court of appeals (the Missouri Court of Appeals). In the trial courts throughout the state, there are 147 circuit judges, 204 associate circuit judges, and 33 commissioners and deputy commissioners." *Judicial Personnel*, MO. CTS., <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=631> (last visited Sept. 22, 2021). Of the thirty judges on

women of Missouri hold 10 federal trial judgeships, including 6 in the Eastern District of Missouri (23.8% of the federal trial court bench).⁵ Yet African American representation in the judiciary was not always so. Before 1980, the total number of Black Missouri judges could almost have been counted on one hand. The Mound City Bar Association (MCBA) was founded in part to benefit the race and advance the professional interests of its members, and MCBA has played a key role in advancing Black lawyers in the St. Louis community onto the judiciary in Missouri.⁶

This Article offers insights about Black Missourian judges, both well-known and little-known, who overcame obstacles and discrimination to serve with distinction, spotlighting the important history of Black judges, principally those who were the first to hold their positions in Missouri. Despite the rich history of African-Americans serving on the bench in the state, very few written accounts of their experiences exist. Fortunately, an

the City of St. Louis Circuit Court, ten (33%) are Black: Circuit Judges David C. Mason, Michael Noble, Paula P. Bryant, Annette Llewellyn, and Calea Stovall-Reid; Associate Circuit Judges Barbara Peebles, Nicole Colbert-Bochway, Lynn R. Perkins, and Craig K. Higgins; and Commissioner Rochelle Woodiest. *Alphabetical List of Judges*, 22ND CIR. CT.: ST. LOUIS, MO., http://www.stlcitycircuitcourt.com/index2.html?XMLFile=xml/Alpha_Judges.xml [https://perma.cc/ZNH2-7RJC]. Among the forty-four judges on St. Louis County Circuit Court, four (9%) are Black: Circuit Judges David L. Vincent, III, Sandra Farragut-Hemphill, and Renée Hardin-Tammons; and Associate Circuit Judge Heather R. Cunningham. *Our Judges*, ST. LOUIS CTY. CIR. CT.: 21ST JUDICIAL CIR. OF MO., <https://wp.stlcourtscourts.com/our-judges/> [https://perma.cc/AV6F-N7PX]. Of the thirty-seven judges serving on the Jackson County Circuit Court, five (13.5%) are Black: Circuit Judges Kevin D. Harrell, Kenneth “Kenny” R. Garrett, III, Mark A. Styles, Jr., and Jalilah Otto; and Associate Circuit Judge Kea S. Bird-Riley. *Our Judges*, 16TH CIR. CT. OF JACKSON CTY., MO., <https://www.16thcircuit.org/our-judges> [https://perma.cc/9LLN-PGNT].

5. Missouri federal trial courts are comprised of district judges, bankruptcy judges, and magistrate judges. Of the forty-two federal trial judges in Missouri, ten (23.8%) are African American, in seniority order: District Judges Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr., Henry E. Autrey, Brian C. Wimes, and Ronnie L. White, Sr.; Magistrate Judges Nannette A. Baker, Shirley A. Padmore Mensah, Noelle C. Collins, Willie J. Epps, Jr., and Lajuana M. Counts; and Chief Bankruptcy Judge Kathy Surratt-States. The St. Louis-based judges, Eastern District of Missouri, in seniority order: District Judges Henry E. Autrey and Ronnie L. White, Sr.; Magistrate Judges Nannette A. Baker, Shirley A. Padmore Mensah, and Noelle C. Collins; and Chief Bankruptcy Judge Kathy Surratt-States. *Judges' Contact Information and Requirements*, U.S. DIST. CT.: E. DIST. OF MO., <https://www.moed.uscourts.gov/judges-contact-information-and-requirements> [https://perma.cc/8KDN-575G]; *Chief Judge Kathy A. Surratt-States*, U.S. BANKR. CT.: E. DIST. OF MO., <https://www.moeb.uscourts.gov/content/chief-judge-kathy-surratt-states> [https://perma.cc/4MQE-G3NT]. The Kansas City-based judges, Western District of Missouri, in seniority order: District Judges Fernando J. Gaitan and Brian C. Wimes; and Magistrate Judge Lajuana M. Counts. *Judges*, U.S. CTS.: W. DIST. OF MO., <https://www.mow.uscourts.gov/district/judges> [https://perma.cc/4Q7F-MLQ8]. U.S. Magistrate Judge Willie J. Epps, Jr. sits in the Western District of Missouri in Jefferson City. *Id.*

6. Hon. Anne-Marie Clarke, *History of the Black Bar*, 30 ST. LOUIS B.J. 18 (1984).

oral history survives among the senior members of the bar. Dozens of practitioners and judges from various racial backgrounds were interviewed for this Article. The interviews and email correspondence, along with archival material, historical data, personal records, news articles, law review articles, and books, form the basis of this work. Part I of the Article first explores the early history of Black lawyers in Missouri from 1871, and then turns to the first Black judges in Missouri from 1900 to 1980. Part II focuses on Black judges between 1980 and the present, highlighting their backgrounds and key achievements.

I. JUST THE BEGINNING FOR MISSOURI'S BLACK LAWYERS AND JUDGES

A. *Historical Background*

The first record of any Black lawyer in Missouri appears in 1871, fifty years after Missouri entered the Union.⁷ The first Black judge in Missouri emerged about three decades later in 1900, when Walter Moran Farmer was appointed to the St. Louis City Municipal Court.⁸ The dearth of Black lawyers and judges in Missouri—and indeed, throughout the nation—for all but relatively recent history is best understood against the backdrop of historical context.

The Missouri Compromise in 1820 was one of the earliest congressional attempts to find a solution to America's tolerance of slavery.⁹ As new states sought to join the Union, the question of whether they could allow slavery arose.¹⁰ Missouri sought admission as a slave state.¹¹ To maintain balance in the Senate between slave states and free states, Maine was admitted as a free state alongside Missouri as a slave state, in a move known as the

7. *City and Vicinity*, KAN. CITY DAILY TIMES, Nov. 15, 1871; J. CLAY SMITH, JR., EMANCIPATION: THE MAKING OF THE BLACK LAWYER 1844-1944 331 (1999).

8. SMITH, JR., *supra* note 7, at 332.

9. Roberta Alexander, *Dred Scott: The Decision That Sparked A Civil War*, 34 N. KY. L. REV. 643, 647 (2007). "Although slavery was a fully entrenched institution in Missouri, the state never seceded from the Union during the Civil War. Unlike in the seceding states, slavery was not a dominant social, economic or political issue. Slaves constituted only 10% of Missouri's population, and only 1-2% of the population owned slaves." JOSHUA M. DUNN, COMPLEX JUSTICE: THE CASE OF MISSOURI V. JENKINS 32 (2008).

10. Alexander, *supra* note 9, at 646.

11. *Id.*

Missouri Compromise.¹² Henry Clay—a slaveholder—is credited with orchestrating the Missouri Compromise, which allowed enslavement to continue for the next four decades.¹³ During this same time in Massachusetts, Macon Bolling Allen became the first known Black lawyer in the United States in 1844 and was appointed twice as Justice of the Peace, making him the nation's first Black judge.¹⁴

Slavery divided the country, soon leading to the bloodiest war in American history. Chief Justice Michael A. Wolff of the Missouri Supreme Court summarized the multifarious racial views within Missouri during the Civil War:

As a border state, Missouri was having a real civil war, from which [the State is] still in recovery. Members of the same families fought one another. [Missouri's] battles, not as big or as well known as Vicksburg, Shiloh and Gettysburg, were nonetheless brutal. Acts of terrorism by small cadres abounded.

Missouri was said to have at least three distinct factions: The Charcoals, so called because of their demand for the immediate end of slavery. The Claybanks, because their principles were thought to be “pallid gray” - they were unionists, but they favored gradual emancipation. Some of these loyal unionists were themselves slaveholders. And, of course, there were confederates.

President Lincoln, exasperated in 1863 by the bitter divisions among [the State's] unionists, wrote: “It is very painful to me that you in Missouri cannot, or will not, settle your factional quarrel among yourselves. I have been

12. *Id.* at 647.

13. “The Great Compromise may have ‘hushed’ the controversy for the moment, [President Thomas] Jefferson thought, but it would rise again. As it is, he went on to say, ‘we have the wolf by the ear, and we can neither hold him, nor safely let him go. [J]ustice is in one scale, and self-preservation in the other.’ The failure of the new generation of political leaders to settle the controversy amicably grieved him deeply. It was ‘suicide,’ he lamented, and ‘treason against the hopes of the world.’ The ‘unwise and unworthy passions of their sons,’ he feared, would destroy the great nation he and the other Founding Fathers had made.” HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR., *LIFE UPON THESE SHORES: LOOKING AT AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY, 1513-2008* 61 (2011).

14. *14 Groundbreaking Black Lawyers*, A.B.A. J. (Feb. 22, 2020), https://www.abajournal.com/gallery/groundbreaking_Black_lawyers/1920 (last visited Apr. 19, 2021).

tormented with it beyond endurance for months, by both sides. Neither side pays the least respect to my appeals to your reason.”¹⁵

After the War, the late 1860s represented a more hopeful, if short-lived, era of Reconstruction.¹⁶ The first iteration of the Ku Klux Klan rose after the Civil War and fell, for a time, thanks largely to President Ulysses S. Grant’s creation of the United States Department of Justice.¹⁷ Howard University established the first law school for Blacks in 1869, located in Washington D.C.¹⁸ That same year, George Lewis Ruffin became the first Black graduate of a U.S. law school, earning his law degree from Harvard Law School.¹⁹ Shortly thereafter, in 1872, Charlotte E. Ray became the first Black woman to graduate from law school, earning her law degree from Howard University.²⁰ Blacks across the South gained significant, if brief, political standing when Hiram Revels (Mississippi) and Joseph Rainey (South Carolina) were elected to Congress.²¹

15. Michael A. Wolff, *Chief Just. of the Sup. Ct. of Missouri, Keynote Address at the Washington Univ. Dred Scott Conference* (Mar. 1, 2007), <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=8827> (last visited Sept. 27, 2021).

16. HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR., *LINCOLN ON RACE AND SLAVERY* 142–63 (Donald Yacovone ed., 2009).

17. Allyson Hobbs, *The US Government Destroyed the Ku Klux Klan Once. It Could Do So Again*, THE GUARDIAN (Aug. 21, 2017, 5:00 PM), <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/aug/21/us-government-ku-klux-klan-charlottesville>; *Grant, Reconstruction and the KKK*, PBS, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/grant-klux/> [<https://perma.cc/TUW4-9AXF>]; Brian Greene, *Created 150 Years Ago, the Justice Department’s First Mission Was to Protect Black Rights*, SMITHSONIAN MAG. (July 1, 2020), <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/created-150-years-ago-justice-departments-first-mission-was-protect-black-rights-180975232/> [<https://perma.cc/VD8M-X6E5>]; see also GATES, JR., *LIFE UPON THESE SHORES*, *supra* note 13, at 151–52.

18. *The Establishment of the First Black Law School*, THE HISTORY ENGINE, <https://historyengine.richmond.edu/episodes/view/3554> [<https://perma.cc/WW6B-XFLP>].

19. *George Lewis Ruffin*, BRIDGEWATER ST. UNIV. VIRTUAL COMMONS, <https://vc.bridgew.edu/hoba/33/> [<https://perma.cc/H2BH-VRSU>]; *George Lewis Ruffin Society*, NORTHEASTERN UNIV. SCH. OF CRIMINOLOGY & CRIMINAL JUST., <https://cssh.northeastern.edu/scj/about/george-lewis-ruffin-society/> [<https://perma.cc/9CZV-5YVZ>] (claiming that in 1883 Ruffin became the first Black judge in the U.S.).

20. See *Blacks in Law; Individuals Who Paved the Way for African-Americans to Enter in the Field of Law*, TENNESSEE TRIB., Feb. 16, 2006, at E2. In 1870, Ada H. Kepley became the first White woman to graduate from law school. *Id.*

21. See *Black Americans in Congress*, U.S. HOUSE OF REP.: HIST., ART, & ARCHIVES, <https://history.house.gov/Exhibitions-and-Publications/BAIC/Black-Americans-in-Congress/> [<https://perma.cc/V4NL-RWLN>].

Racial violence abounded in Missouri during Reconstruction, including shootings and lynchings, despite the fact that—or perhaps because—Missouri was not subject to federally-mandated Reconstruction.²² General Clinton B. Fisk,²³ a White senior official in the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands during Reconstruction, described post-war Missouri:

Slavery dies hard. I hear its expiring agonies and witness its contortions in death in every quarter of my district. In Boone, Howard, Randolph, and Callaway[,] the emancipation ordinance has caused disruption of society equal to anything I saw in Arkansas or Mississippi in the year 1863. I blush for my race when I discover the wicked barbarity of the late masters and mistresses of the recently freed persons of the counties heretofore named [T]he poor Blacks are rapidly concentrating in the towns and especially at garrisoned places. My hands and heart are full There is much sickness and suffering among them; many need help.²⁴

Freed Blacks not only lacked resources, skills, job-training, and education, but they were also subjected to the daily horrors of anti-Black sentiment and violence dominating Missouri.²⁵ Unsurprisingly, the era of Missouri's first Black lawyers and judges was characterized by very slow progress and little acceptance of Black professionals in any career, much less the law. Nevertheless, a few Black lawyers practiced in Missouri with some success during this period, and thereafter slowly began donning the black robe.

22. WALTER JOHNSON, *THE BROKEN HEART OF AMERICA: ST. LOUIS AND THE VIOLENT HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES* 141 (2020).

23. General Clinton B. Fisk, through the Freedmen's Bureau and the American Missionary Association, established a free school for Black and White children. *Fisk University History*, FISK UNIV., <https://www.fisk.edu/about/history/> (last visited Apr. 24, 2021). Fisk University, an HBCU, is named in honor of General Fisk, who provided the school with "facilities in former Union Army barracks near the present site of Nashville's Union Station." *Id.* See also EZRA J. WARNER, *GENERALS IN BLUE: LIVES OF THE UNION COMMANDERS* 155 (1965).

24. LORENZO J. GREEN, GARY R. KREMER & ANTONIO F. HOLLAND, *MISSOURI'S BLACK HERITAGE* 91 (2d ed. 1993).

25. *Id.* at 92.

B. The First Black Lawyers

There is some debate about the first “real” Black lawyer in Missouri. On the one hand, John H. Johnson likely became the first licensed Black lawyer in Missouri on December 7, 1871.²⁶ Yet he apparently did not practice law full time, if at all, instead working at the Custom House in St. Louis, perhaps due to challenges finding clients to support a law practice.²⁷ The first “full-time” Black lawyer in Missouri was probably Albert Burgess, who in 1877 began a career spanning over fifty years. He served as the first Black prosecutor in St. Louis, handling cases throughout the City of St. Louis, including those arising from the streetcar strike of 1900. His work opened the door for the growing numbers of Black lawyers after him.²⁸ Although they faced indescribable racism and other barriers throughout their careers, these counselors nevertheless achieved success and left legacies of leadership, perseverance, and humanitarianism.²⁹

26. *City and Vicinity*, KAN. CITY DAILY TIMES, Nov. 15, 1871, at 4; SMITH, JR., *supra* note 7, at 331 (citing *A Colored Lawyer*, NEW NAT'L ERA, Dec. 14, 1871).

27. *City and Vicinity*, KAN. CITY DAILY TIMES, Nov. 15, 1871, at 4; SMITH, JR., *supra* note 7, at 331 (citing *A Colored Lawyer*, NEW NAT'L ERA, Dec. 14, 1871); STAFF OF S. COMM., 46TH CONG., REP. ON NEGRO EXODUS FROM SOUTHERN STATES, NO. 693 AT PART II, 288, 288–91 (1880).

28. *First Negro Lawyer in St. Louis Completing Fifty Years of Practice*, ST. LOUIS GLOBE-DEMOCRAT MAG., May 29, 1927, at 4 (available at <http://omeka.wustl.edu/omeka/items/show/13633>).

29. STAFF OF S. COMM., NO. 693, *supra* note 27, at 288–91; *First Negro Lawyer in St. Louis*, *supra* note 28, at 13.

C. *The First Black Judges*³⁰

1. Hon. Walter Moran Farmer

Walter M. Farmer, the first Black to graduate from any law school in Missouri, is likely Missouri's first Black judge.³¹ A successful lawyer and effective activist, he spent most of his life in Missouri and Illinois. Born in Brunswick, Missouri, he graduated with high honors from Lincoln Institute (as the school was then known) in Jefferson City in 1884.³² Farmer ultimately became the first Black graduate of Washington University School of Law in 1889, despite his classmates' repeated efforts to force him to quit.³³ After graduation, Farmer began practicing law in St. Louis where he "enjoyed a diverse practice covering all branches of law,"³⁴ including "several major murder trials and probate cases."³⁵

30. Six judges are profiled in this section. Although never a judge in Missouri—and not the "first" Black elevated to his court—Scovel Richardson became the second Black judge to serve on the United States Court for International Trade in 1957, where he sat until his death in 1982. *Richardson, Scovel*, ENCYCLOPEDIA.COM, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/african-american-focus/news-wires-White-papers-and-books/richardson-scovel> [<https://perma.cc/B9WY-52SA>]. Richardson does not fit neatly within any section of this Article. Nonetheless, Richardson should be celebrated because of his eminent legal career and impact in Missouri, as he moved to the State in 1939 to join the faculty of Lincoln University School of Law, leading the school as dean from 1944 to 1953. *Id.* In 1953, the same year as his elevation to judge, Richardson became the first Black member of the Bar Association of St. Louis. *Id.* For more on Richardson, see Colin Gordon, *Dress Rehearsal for Shelley: Scovel Richardson and the Challenge to Racial Restrictions in St. Louis*, 67 WASH. U.J.L. & POL'Y 87 (2022) (also published in this volume).

31. *Attorney Walter M. Farmer*, THE BROADAX (Dec. 31, 1910), <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn84024055/1910-12-31/ed-1/seq-4/> [<https://perma.cc/7GS6-7E4Q>].

32. *Id.*

33. SMITH, JR., *supra* note 7, at 332.

34. *Attorney Walter M. Farmer*, *supra* note 31. "One among his many notable cases in St. Louis was a will contest in which a White lady had left a Colored woman \$13,000, the relatives of the lady hotly contested the case, and Mr. Farmer ably represented the Colored woman and finally won out." *Id.*

35. SMITH, JR., *supra* note 7, at 332. Appealing one of his murder cases, *Duncan v. Missouri*, Farmer became the first Black to argue before the Supreme Court of Missouri in 1893, and, the next year, one of the first Blacks to argue before the Supreme Court of the United States. 152 U.S. 377 (1894); Marshall D. Hier, *Duncan Shot a Hole in Brady's Breast*, 50 ST. LOUIS B.J. 40, 42–43 (2003); Jae Jones, *Walter M. Farmer: First African American to Serve in a Judicial Capacity in Missouri*, BLACKTHEN (Jan. 13, 2021), <https://blackthen.com/walter-m-farmer-first-african-american-serve-judicial-capacity-missouri/> [<https://perma.cc/T69U-SJNR>]. Duncan's conviction and sentence were upheld, and he died by hanging in 1894. Hier, *supra*, at 43. Farmer maintained that "[i]f ever an innocent man was hanged, that man was Duncan." RICHARD POLENBERG, HEAR MY SAD STORY: THE TRUE TALES THAT INSPIRED "STAGOLEE," "JOHN HENRY," AND OTHER TRADITIONAL AMERICAN FOLK SONGS 25 (2015).

In 1900, Farmer became the first Black in Missouri to serve in a judicial capacity when Judge William Zachritz appointed him a Special Judge in the St. Louis Municipal Court.³⁶ In 1905, Farmer departed St. Louis for Chicago to continue the practice of law.³⁷ Farmer, a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), “played a leadership role nationally, having served as a delegate to the Republican National Convention three times.”³⁸ Farmer advocated zealously for justice and equality before retiring from the practice in 1942.³⁹ Although a century has passed since he left St. Louis, Farmer is still recognized as a trailblazer for Missouri lawyers and judges.

2. Hon. Crittenden Clark

In 1922, the same year the Mound City Bar Association was founded in St. Louis, Crittenden Clark became the first Black lawyer elected Justice of the Peace in Missouri.⁴⁰ He had been active in Missouri politics for more than twenty years. Before his election, Clark formed the Negro Jefferson Club in St. Louis with C.C. Rankin, W.H. Fields, and James Milton Turner.⁴¹ While a practicing attorney, Clark’s most publicized case was a challenge to a major railway company.⁴²

36. SMITH, JR., *supra* note 7, at 332.

37. *Id.*; *Hon. Walter M. Farmer*, THE PROFESSIONAL WORLD (Columbia & Jefferson City), Oct. 30, 1903, at 1, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/data/batches/mohi_jerome_ver01/data/sn89066321/00200292637/1903103001/0404.pdf [<https://perma.cc/7AGJ-8L95>].

38. David Roediger, *What’s Wrong with These Pictures - Race, Narratives of Admission, and the Liberal Self-Representations of Historically White Colleges and Universities*, 18 WASH. U.J.L. & POL’Y 203, 211 (2005).

39. *Obituaries Walter M. Farmer*, CHI. TRIB., (Jul. 26, 1943), <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/52260996/chicago-tribune/> [<https://perma.cc/SUUB-VMCF>].

40. SMITH, JR., *supra* note 7, at 332; *see also* GREEN ET AL., *supra* note 24, at 148.

41. GREEN ET AL., *supra* note 24, at 111.

42. SMITH, JR., *supra* note 7, at 332.

3. Hon. Carl Roman Johnson

Carl Roman Johnson became Kansas City's first Black judge upon his election to the Municipal Court in Kansas City in 1955.⁴³ Prior to taking the bench, Johnson had a notable career as a litigator and civil rights proponent. He served as co-counsel with Charles Hamilton Houston, L. Amasa Knox, and others for Lucile Bluford in *Bluford v. Canada*, the case that established a journalism school at Lincoln University.⁴⁴ He served as president of the Kansas City NAACP for twenty years and Grand Polemarch of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity.⁴⁵ And alongside Thurgood Marshall as co-counsel, Johnson represented Esther Williams in 1952 in *Kansas City v. Williams*,⁴⁶ a case that desegregated the Swope Park swimming pool.⁴⁷

4. Hon. Theodore McMillian

Theodore McMillian, a legal giant in Missouri, became the state's first Black Circuit Judge in 1956, the first Black judge on the Missouri Court of Appeals in 1972, and the first Black judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit in 1978.⁴⁸ Born in 1919 in an impoverished area of St. Louis, McMillian was the great-grandson of a slave and the oldest of ten

43. *The Week's Census*, JET, Mar. 31, 1960, at 51; Fred Slough, *Pioneers in Civil Rights*, K.C. COUNS., Dec. 1998, at 11.

44. *Johnson, Carl R.*, KAN. CITY PUB. LIBR., <https://pendergastkc.org/names/johnson-carl-r> [<https://perma.cc/4DYC-PMVQ>].

45. *The Week's Census*, *supra* note 43, at 51.

46. *Kansas City v. Williams*, 205 F.2d 47 (8th Cir. 1953).

47. Fred Slough, *supra* note 43, at 10. Howard F. Sachs, now a senior U.S. District Judge, "was a clerk for Judge Albert [A.] Ridge who decided the case." Laura Ziegler, *Swope Park Pool Desegregation Case Important To Kansas City Civil Rights Struggle*, KCUR, (Feb. 25, 2016), <https://www.kcur.org/community/2016-02-25/swope-park-pool-desegregation-case-important-to-kansas-city-civil-rights-struggle> [<https://perma.cc/E3TH-62K3>].

48. Michael A. Wolff, *Ted McMillian: The Happy Coincidence of Timing, Talent, and Persistence*, 43 ST. LOUIS U.L.J. 1297, 1299 (1999). In 1949, as McMillian graduated from law school, William H. Hastie was appointed by President Truman to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, a seat he held until 1971, making Hastie the first Black judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for any circuit. ARTHUR M. SCHLESINGER, JR., ROBERT KENNEDY AND HIS TIMES 376 (1978). For more on Judge Theodore McMillian, see Karen Tokarz, *Judge Theodore McMillian: Beacon of Hope and Champion for Justice*, 67 WASH. U.J.L. & POL'Y 359 (2022) (also published in this volume).

children.⁴⁹ Upon discharge from World War II military service in 1946—where he achieved the rank of First Lieutenant—McMillian graduated first in his class and became the second Black graduate of Saint Louis University School of Law.⁵⁰ Yet “[d]espite his success as a law student, racial discrimination made it difficult for McMillian to find a position with any of the law firms in St. Louis.”⁵¹ This led McMillian and fellow Saint Louis University School of Law graduate Alphonse Lynch to open their own law firm, Lynch & McMillian.⁵² Work, however, was slow, so McMillian taught adult education classes and managed the Aubert Theatre at night to support his family.⁵³

In 1952, McMillian ran for office with a reform slate of candidates against an entrenched incumbent, 19th Ward Democratic Committeeman Jordan Chambers.⁵⁴ His inclusion on the ballot was part of a larger strategic move. “The ticket included Phil Donnelly for Governor and Ed Dowd, Sr. for St. Louis Circuit Attorney. Chambers and the other incumbents were recognized machine politicians. McMillian’s role was to take votes away from the machine and help the reform ticket, a move that, if it failed, could have been political suicide.”⁵⁵ McMillian ended up losing by a large margin, but the reform ticket won. McMillian’s loyalty and efforts were rewarded when, “[o]n the recommendation of Bob Dowd, Sr., who had been a classmate of McMillian, newly-elected Ed Dowd[, Sr.] (Bob’s brother) hired McMillian as an Assistant Circuit Attorney” in 1953.⁵⁶

McMillian was the first Black lawyer hired by Ed Dowd, Sr. McMillian took on a heavy workload and obtained a high conviction rate in felony cases. Promoted to Chief Trial Assistant, he gained a reputation as “a conscientious, hard-working prosecutor who also showed respect for the civil rights of defendants.”⁵⁷ He served as a prosecutor until his appointment

49. *The Honorable Theodore McMillian: Leading the Way*, U.S. CTS. LIBR. 8TH CIR., <https://www.lb8.uscourts.gov/444/pubsandservices/histsociety/McMillian.handout.memorial.revised2018-final.pdf> (last visited Apr. 24, 2021).

50. *Id.* Interestingly, “law was not his first choice . . .” and McMillian “had dreamed of studying medicine, but racial quotas at medical schools would have forced him to wait five years to begin.” *Id.*

51. *Id.*

52. *Id.*

53. Karen Tokarz, *Final Tribute to Judge Theodore McMillian: A Man of Law and Justice*, 19 WASH. U.J.L. & POL’Y 13, 15 (2005).

54. *Id.*

55. *Id.*

56. *Id.*

57. *Id.*

to the bench as Circuit Judge by Governor Phil M. Donnelly in March 1956.⁵⁸

Edward L. Dowd, Jr., a former United States Attorney and co-founder of Dowd Bennett, remembers the Dowd family's relationship with Judge McMillian.

My Father, the real Edward L. Dowd, was raised in St. Louis by Major Edward Dowd who taught him that everyone should be treated the same and treated well. When he was elected Circuit Attorney of the City of St. Louis in 1952, he quickly integrated the office by hiring a recent brilliant graduate of St. Louis University named Ted McMillian who had ranked first in his law school class but was unable to find employment in a law firm in St. Louis. Luckily, my uncle, the Honorable Robert G. Dowd, was a friend and classmate of Ted's and he told the new Circuit Attorney about him. Dad interviewed and hired Ted who became the first Assistant Circuit Attorney. Of course, his career was outstanding in every way and he became a state trial judge, Court of Appeals judge (with Robert Dowd) . . . and 8th Circuit Court of Appeals judge for many years. Everything he did, he was the first African American to do.⁵⁹

58. *Id.*

59. E-mail from Edward L. Dowd, Jr., Partner, Dowd Bennett, to Judge Epps (July 20, 2020) (on file with Judge Epps). Dowd Jr. notes that:

Dowd Sr. also hired the Honorable Clyde Cahill, the Honorable George Draper and Curtis Crawford as Assistant Circuit Attorneys and they were all outstanding prosecutors and had tremendous careers. Clyde Cahill was a courageous attorney for the NAACP and became an excellent Federal District Court judge. George Draper became a Federal judge in the District of Columbia. Curtis Crawford became the Chair of the U.S. Parole Commission. All of these legal pioneers only needed a chance to excel.

Id.

As a judge, McMillian authored “landmark decisions in cases about desegregation, free speech, civil rights, employment discrimination and affirmative action.”⁶⁰ He died in 2006, leaving behind a legacy as a man of firsts and an advocate of civil rights.⁶¹

5. Hon. Nathan B. “Ben” Young, Jr.

In 1965, Nathan B. “Ben” Young, Jr. became the first full time Black judge on St. Louis’s Municipal Court.⁶² Born in Tuskegee, Alabama in 1894 as the son of Nathan B. Young, Sr.⁶³—a professor at Tuskegee Institute who helped advance Black education in the early twentieth century—Young, Jr. grew up next door to Booker T. Washington. He earned his B.A. at Florida A&M and law degree at Yale.⁶⁴ He began practicing in Birmingham, moving to St. Louis after his 1924 marriage to Mamie Young.⁶⁵

Co-founder of the *St. Louis American*, Young was publisher and editorial writer for over forty years.⁶⁶ He was also “a prosecutor in the St. Louis City Courts” before taking the bench.⁶⁷ Once on the bench, Judge Young “became a powerful voice for justice and civil rights in the region, even in the face of threats from the [KKK] and the horror of seeing a cross burn on his lawn.”⁶⁸

60. Richard B. Teitelman, *Celebrating African-Americans’ Contributions to Missouri’s Justice System*, MO. CTS. (Mar. 5, 2013), <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=60263> (last visited Sept. 27, 2021) (reflections of then-Missouri Chief Justice Richard B. Teitelman).

61. *Id.*; *The Honorable Theodore McMillian*, HIST. SOC. OF THE U.S. CTS. IN THE EIGHTH CIR. (2001), <https://www.lb8.uscourts.gov:444/pubsandservices/histsociety/coa8.mcmillian.html> [<https://perma.cc/7BV2-KE4B>].

62. Amelia Flood, *Extraordinary Archive of Civil Rights Pioneer and Judge Brings St. Louis History to Life*, ST. LOUIS U. (Feb. 2018), <https://www.slu.edu/news/2018/february/judge-young-archive.php> [<https://perma.cc/4SX9-4CPB>].

63. Nathan B. Young, Sr. was a member of W.E.B. DuBois’s “Talented Tenth” at Tuskegee, later serving as president of Florida A&M College and Lincoln University in Jefferson City. ANTONIO FREDERICK HOLLAND, NATHAN B. YOUNG AND THE STRUGGLE OVER BLACK HIGHER EDUCATION 191 n.41 (2006).

64. Flood, *supra* note 62.

65. *Id.* In 1937, Young published *Your St. Louis and Mine*, “a history of the local black community.” HOLLAND, *supra* note 63, at 195.

66. In 1928, Nathan B. “Ben” Young, Jr. purchased the “then year-old” *St. Louis American* with Nathaniel Sweets, a Lincoln University graduate, at the urging of his father. It flourished under their leadership and became a successful news publication. HOLLAND, *supra* note 63, at 203; Flood, *supra* note 62.

67. HOLLAND, *supra* note 63, at 195.

68. Flood, *supra* note 62; HOLLAND, *supra* note 63, at 195, 196.

6. Hon. Lewis W. Clymer

In 1970, Lewis W. Clymer became the first Black appointed to the Jackson County Circuit Court.⁶⁹ Clymer earned a law degree from Howard University in 1939, returning to St. Louis to practice law after passing the Missouri bar.⁷⁰ Clymer began his career in private practice before serving as a federal government official, assistant prosecuting attorney, assistant attorney general for Missouri, and, following his 1963 election in Kansas City, a Municipal Judge.⁷¹ He was also actively involved in the community, serving on the Board of Directors of The Urban League and the Kansas City Missouri School Board while maintaining a lifetime membership in the NAACP.⁷²

II. MISSOURI'S BLACK JUDGES, 1980-PRESENT

The generation of Black Missourian judges that began serving in 1980, and thereafter, experienced increased opportunities within the legal profession. Such progress, of course, is linked directly to desegregation,

69. Res. No. 011201, COUNCIL OF K.C., MO. (Aug. 23, 2001); *Judge Lewis W. Clymer*, MO. LAWS. MEDIA (Sept. 3, 2001), <https://molawyersmedia.com/2001/09/03/judge-lewis-w-clymer/> [<https://perma.cc/HBA4-EZYL>].

[Judge Clymer] was the first African-American judge on the Jackson County Circuit Court. Kansas City Lawyer Tom Sweeny, Sr. was a lawyer at the Popham Law Firm when I was there. As I recall the story, Sweeny had been on the Judicial Commission in 1970 when Judge Clymer made the panel. There was a feeling among the Commission members, particularly including liberal Democrat Tom Sweeny, that the Jackson County Circuit Court needed to be integrated. The Commission put Lewis Clymer and African-American lawyer Clifford Spottsville on the panel to send to the governor along with one White lawyer. My understanding is that Tom Sweeny and/or other Commission members talked with that White lawyer and suggested that he should tell the governor that the Commission would like to see one of the other two lawyers appointed. My understanding is that happened. Clifford Spottsville was later appointed to the Kansas City Municipal Court.

E-mail from John W. Kurtz, Partner, Hubbard & Kurtz, L.L.P., to Judge Epps (July 10, 2020) (on file with Judge Epps).

70. Res. No. 011201, *supra* note 69.

71. *Judge Lewis W. Clymer Award*, JACKSON CTY. BAR ASS'N, <https://www.jacksoncountybar.com/awards-scholarships/> [<https://perma.cc/8JUG-NPKJ>]; Res. No. 011201, *supra* note 69.

72. *Judge Lewis W. Clymer Award*, *supra* note 71.

which sparked an influx of Blacks into law school and the legal profession in the late 1960s and early 1970s.⁷³ In 1964, first-year law classes in the United States included only 300 Black students.⁷⁴ By 1968, some estimates indicated there were up to 3,000 Black lawyers nationwide.⁷⁵ Ironically, despite several law-schools' outreach programs in the mid-1960s to recruit Black students, the increasing competitiveness of law school admissions and the resulting stratification of law schools presented an additional barrier for many Blacks.⁷⁶ But the creation of the Council of Legal Education Opportunity (CLEO) in 1967 and corresponding outreach and summer programs substantially boosted Black first-year law school enrollment.⁷⁷ Indeed, "[t]he number of Black first-year law students outside the historically Black schools rose from about 200 in 1964-1965 to perhaps 500 in 1968-1969, 800 in 1969-1970, and 1700 in 1973-1974."⁷⁸

By 1970, Black lawyers comprised 1.29% of the lawyers in the United States.⁷⁹ While the number of Black law students enrolling began to stagnate in the late 1970s and early 1980s,⁸⁰ by the time President Obama was elected in 2008 more than 40,000 Black lawyers practiced in the United States, "the overwhelming majority of whom matriculated from integrated law

73. For example, in 1968, Harold L. "Doc" Holliday, Jr. became the first Black to graduate from the University of Missouri School of Law. Interview with Michael A. Middleton, Deputy Chancellor Emeritus and Professor Emeritus of Law, U. Mo. Sch. L., and Eric Kendall Banks, Attorney at Law, Banks Law LLC (July 18, 2020); e-mail from Kimberly J. Norwood, Professor of Law, Wash. U. Sch. L., to Judge Epps (July 18, 2020) (on file with Judge Epps).

74. Richard H. Sander, *A Systemic Analysis of Affirmative Action in American Law Schools*, 57 STAN. L. REV. 367, 375 (2004) (noting that "one-third of these [students] were attending the nation's half-dozen historically Black law schools").

75. Henry McGee, Jr., *Minority Students in Law School: Black Lawyers and the Struggle for Racial Justice in the American Social Order*, 20 BUFF. L. REV. 423, 424-25 (1971).

76. Sander, *supra* note 74, at 376-77 (noting that "[t]he [Law School Admission Test], introduced in the late 1940s, precipitated the development and adoption of more objective admissions practices").

77. *Id.* at 378-79.

78. *Id.*

79. *Id.* Other estimates for the number of Black lawyers in 1970 are slightly higher. *See, e.g.*, Gail Heriot, *Affirmative Action in American Law Schools*, 17 J. CONTEMP. LEGAL ISSUES 237, 263 n.57 (2008) (noting an increase in the total number of African American attorneys from 4,000 in 1970 to an estimated 44,800 in 2006).

80. Edward J. Littlejohn & Leonard S. Rubinowitz, *Black Enrollment in Law Schools: Forward to the Past?*, 12 T. MARSHALL L. REV. 415, 446-47 (1987). This stagnation occurred in part due to the rising cost of tuition. *Id.*

schools.”⁸¹ This number has continued to grow slowly.⁸² Today, Blacks comprise 5% of the nation’s 1,352,027 active lawyers,⁸³ 10% of sitting federal judges,⁸⁴ 13% of active federal judges,⁸⁵ and 5.4% of Missouri State judges.⁸⁶ The increase in Black lawyers, both nationally and in Missouri, has led to opportunities for judicial appointments of African Americans. What follows are profiles of Black judges who achieved a “first” in Missouri.⁸⁷

A. *Hon. Clyde S. Cahill, Jr.*

Clyde S. Cahill, Jr. served as the first Black United States District Judge in Missouri after being nominated on April 2, 1980, for the Eastern District of Missouri.⁸⁸ After serving as a District Judge for twelve years, Judge Cahill assumed senior status on April 9, 1992, and served in that capacity

81. David B. Wilkins, *The New Social Engineers in the Age of Obama: Black Corporate Lawyers and the Making of the First Black President*, 53 *HOW. L.J.* 557, 561 (2010).

82. *ABA Profile of the Legal Profession*, A.B.A., 2020, at 33–34, 109 (available at <https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/news/2020/07/potlp2020.pdf>).

Additionally, the importance of African American representation in the legal profession cannot be understated, especially when “[e]mpirical evidence from the legal and medical fields show that African-American clients are more likely to trust and communicate effectively with African-American service providers.” Shani M. King, *Race, Identity, and Professional Responsibility: Why Legal Services Organizations Need African American Staff Attorneys*, 18 *CORNELL J.L. & PUB. POL’Y* 1 (2008).

83. Nicole Black, *ABA 2019 Report: Lawyer Demographics, Earnings, Tech Choices, and More*, MYCASE, <https://www.mycase.com/blog/2019/08/aba-2019-report-lawyer-demographics-earnings-tech-choices-and-more/> [<https://perma.cc/YBC3-GTF5>]. “More than 40 million black people live in the United States, making up around 13% of the nation’s population.” Kristen Bialik, *5 Facts About Black Americans*, PEW RSCH. CTR. (Feb. 22, 2018), <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/02/22/5-facts-about-blacks-in-the-u-s/> [<https://perma.cc/U8Q5-PRQU>].

84. *Examining the Demographic Compositions of U.S. Circuit and District Courts*, CTR. FOR AM. PROGRESS, <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/courts/reports/2020/02/13/480112/examining-demographic-compositions-u-s-circuit-district-courts/> [<https://perma.cc/34FF-JJB7>].

85. *Id.*

86. *Judicial Personnel*, MO. CTS., <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=631> (last visited Apr. 20, 2021). Out of Missouri’s 423 judges and commissioners, 23 are Black (5.4%). *Id.*

87. The authors regret any omissions from this section, which are unintentional.

88. *African American Judges on the Federal Courts*, FED. JUD. CTR., <https://www.fjc.gov/history/judges/search/african-american> [<https://perma.cc/SA2F-U2XY>]; Alvin A. Reid, *Judge Cahill Remembered for ‘Character, Compassion’*, ST. LOUIS AM. (Dec. 14, 2010), http://www.stlamerican.com/news/local_news/judge-clyde-cahill-remembered-for-character-compassion/article_eb6e2290-f71e-5014-a940-9d14f8a97037.html (last visited Oct. 16, 2021). For more on Judge Cahill, see Hon. David Mason, *Judge Clyde Cahill: Courage and Action*, 67 *WASH. U.J.L. & POL’Y* 221 (2022) (also published in this volume).

until his death on August 18, 2004.⁸⁹ The Judge, a veteran of World War II, had a successful legal career before joining the judiciary, ranging from private practice, to government service, to filing “the first lawsuit in Missouri to implement the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*” as the NAACP’s Chief Legal Advisor for Missouri.⁹⁰ Judge Cahill was truly a man of “character and competence,” a “fighter of poverty and discrimination,” a “promoter of fairness,” and someone who “opened the door to Black law clerks.”⁹¹

B. Hon. Evelyn M. Baker

In 1983, Judge Evelyn Marie Baker became Missouri’s first Black woman Circuit Court Judge.⁹² She “was the third woman, and the [fourth] Black, to be a [Circuit] judge in Saint Louis.”⁹³ A 1973 graduate of Saint Louis University School of Law, Baker’s career included work with the National Labor Relations Board, the St. Louis City Circuit Attorney’s Office, and the U.S. Attorney’s Office.⁹⁴ Baker retired in 2008, “having served a quarter of a century as a circuit judge.”⁹⁵ In recent years, she has argued against minor defendants being prosecuted as adults in the criminal justice system.⁹⁶

89. *African American Judges on the Federal Courts*, *supra* note 88.

90. Teitelman, *supra* note 60; *Judge Cahill Remembered for ‘Character, Compassion’*, *supra* note 88.

91. E-mail from Edward L. Dowd, Jr., Partner, Dowd Bennett, to Judge Epps (July 20, 2020) (on file with Judge Epps); *Judge Clyde Cahill remembered for ‘Character, Compassion’*, *supra* note 88.

92. JESSIE CARNEY SMITH, *BLACK FIRSTS: 4,000 GROUND-BREAKING AND PIONEERING HISTORICAL EVENTS* 253 (2d ed. 2003). Judge Jane Matilda Bolin was the first Black woman to graduate from Yale Law School in 1931, be admitted to the New York bar in 1932, and become a judge in 1939. Anna Blackburne-Rigsby, *Black Women Judges: The Historical Journey of Black Women to the Nation’s Highest Courts*, 53 *HOW. L.J.* 645, 667 (2010).

93. SMITH, *BLACK FIRSTS*, *supra* note 92, at 253.

94. Karen Tokarz, *Women Judges and Merit Selection Under the Missouri Plan*, 64 *WASH. U.L.Q.* 903, 925 (1986); *see, e.g., Women of the Seventies*, *SAINT LOUIS BRIEF*, Fall 2004, at 19, https://issuu.com/slulaw/docs/volume_6_issue_1.

95. 1983 ~ *Evelyn Baker Becomes Missouri’s First Black Female Judge*, *MO. CTS.* <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=174556> (last visited Oct. 16, 2020).

96. Evelyn Baker, *Bobby Bostic’s Judge to Missouri Senate: Don’t Make My Mistake on Child Defendants*, *RIVERFRONT TIMES* (Aug. 5, 2020, 6:31 AM), <https://www.riverfronttimes.com/newsblog/2020/08/05/bobby-bostics-judge-to-missouri-senate-dont-make-my-mistake-on-child-defendants> [<https://perma.cc/MLZ3-RKRH>].

C. *Hon. Sandra Moore*

In 1983, Sandra Moore became the first Black Administrative Judge for the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) in Missouri, where she served until 1994. Today, she is the Managing Director and Chief Impact Officer of Advantage Capital, a private equity firm based in St. Louis.⁹⁷ Moore attended Washington University for both her B.A. in urban studies and her law degree.⁹⁸ Prior to leading Advantage Capital, Moore served as the president of Urban Strategies where she helped “transform distressed urban core communities” around the country “into vibrant, safe residential neighborhoods with new housing and good schools.”⁹⁹ She was a member of Missouri Governor Mel Carnahan’s cabinet, where she held the position of director of the Missouri Department of Labor.¹⁰⁰ Moore continues to serve the people of City of St. Louis through her positions on numerous Boards of Directors, including Barnes-Jewish Hospital Foundation, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis Black Leadership Roundtable, Urban League of Metro St. Louis, and Washington University National Law Council, among others.¹⁰¹

D. *Hon. Mildred L. Watson*

In 1984, Commissioner Mildred L. Watson, an African American, was appointed as the first woman Commissioner of the juvenile division of the Jackson County Circuit Court.¹⁰² With that appointment, she became the first Black woman judicial officer in Jackson County and also the first

97. *Our Team*, ADVANTAGE CAP., <https://www.advantagecap.com/team> (last visited Oct. 27, 2021).

98. *Sandra Moore*, CTR. FOR THE STUDY OF SOC. POL’Y, <https://cssp.org/team/sandra-moore/> [<https://perma.cc/M4MS-FCHY>].

99. *Id.*

100. Kara Hansen, *Advantage Capital Hires Sandra Moore as Managing Director*, ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH (May 11, 2017) https://www.stltoday.com/pr/business/advantage-capital-hires-sandra-moore-as-managing-director/article_a49d8476-3667-11e7-b751-5cb9017b9fe3.html [<https://perma.cc/MNZ4-LE9A>].

101. *Sandra Moore*, *supra* note 98.

102. E-mail from John W. Kurtz, Partner, Hubbard & Kurtz, L.L.P., to Judge Epps (Aug. 2, 2020) (on file with Judge Epps).

woman of any race to hold a judicial position in Jackson County.¹⁰³ She earned a B.S. in 1942 and M.A. in 1954 from Lincoln University and a J.D. from the University of Missouri-Kansas City in 1974.¹⁰⁴ Prior to becoming a judge, she taught social work for thirteen years at the University of Kansas, as an assistant professor and later as an associate professor, from 1963 to 1976.¹⁰⁵ She died in 2005.¹⁰⁶

E. Hon. Sandra Farragut-Hemphill

On March 13, 1991, Judge Sandra Farragut-Hemphill became the first Black judge on the St. Louis County Circuit Court, first serving as an Associate Circuit Judge after appointment by Governor John Ashcroft.¹⁰⁷ After twenty-three years at the associate level, Governor Jay Nixon elevated her to Circuit Judge in 2014.¹⁰⁸ In 2020, she became the first African American Judge to be named Administrative Judge of the St. Louis County Family Court where she oversees the domestic and juvenile divisions.¹⁰⁹

Hemphill is a graduate of Spelman College and the University of Florida School of Law.¹¹⁰ From 1979 to 1981, she worked at the Jacksonville Legal Aid Society.¹¹¹ In 1982, Hemphill moved from Jacksonville to St. Louis, joined the Missouri bar, and began working at

103. *Id.* In October 1984, Edith Messina, a White female, became the first woman on the Jackson County Circuit Court and the first woman in Jackson County to have the title of judge. E-mail from John W. Kurtz, Partner, Hubbard & Kurtz, L.L.P., to Judge Epps (Aug. 11, 2020) (on file with Judge Epps).

104. E-mail from John W. Kurtz, Partner, Hubbard & Kurtz, L.L.P., and Sean D. O'Brien, Professor, Univ. of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law, to Judge Epps (Aug. 12, 2020) (on file with Judge Epps); Mara Rose Williams, *'Mother of Youth Court' Dies – Mildred Watson was Pioneer in Field of Juvenile Justice*, KAN. CITY STAR, July 4, 2005, at B2.

105. E-mail from John W. Kurtz, Partner, Hubbard & Kurtz, L.L.P., to Judge Epps (July 10, 2020) (on file with Judge Epps).

106. *Id.* Williams, *supra* note 104.

107. Stephanie Maniscalco, *Sandra Farragut-Hemphill Circuit Judge, St. Louis County, MO*, LAWS.MEDIA (June 1, 2018), <https://molawyersmedia.com/2018/06/01/sandra-farragut-hemphill-circuit-judge-st-louis-county/> [https://perma.cc/RX2N-JTN2].

108. *Id.*

109. E-mail from Hon. Sandra Farragut-Hemphill, Circuit Judge, St. Louis County Cir. Ct., to Judge Epps (July 12, 2021) (on file with Judge Epps).

110. Maniscalco, *supra* note 107.

111. *Sandra Farragut-Hemphill*, YOUR MO. JUDGES, <http://www.yourmissourijudges.org/judges/sandra-farragut-hemphill/> [https://perma.cc/KUJ2-UNS4].

Bell, Harris, Kirksey & Thomas.¹¹² Later she was a staff attorney at Legal Services of Eastern Missouri from 1983 through 1986, and then an Assistant County Counselor for St. Louis County from 1986 until 1988.¹¹³ From 1988 until her appointment to the bench, she was a partner of the law firm Cahill, White & Hemphill.¹¹⁴ Judge Hemphill has also taught as an adjunct professor at the law schools of both Saint Louis University and Washington University.¹¹⁵ In 1998, she was elected the first Black president of the Missouri Association of Probate and Associate Circuit Judges.¹¹⁶

F. Hon. Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr.

Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr. was the first Black judge on the Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District,¹¹⁷ and in 1991 he became the first Black Judge on the United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri.¹¹⁸ After serving as Chief Judge, another first, from 2007 to 2014, Judge Gaitan assumed senior status.¹¹⁹ According to Congressman Emanuel Cleaver, a longtime friend of Judge Gaitan, “when a person grows up as did Judge Gaitan, it is easy to understand his commitment to justice for everyone with an almost religious obsession to administer it equally.”¹²⁰ Judge Gaitan “has served various organizations, sat on a multitude of boards, and earned [numerous honors and] awards for his service to the community.”¹²¹ He is proud of his long-time participation in the Just The Beginning Foundation,

112. *Id.* The named partners of Bell, Harris, Kirksey & Thomas, an African American law firm, were James Bell, Allen Harris, Charles Kirksey, and Henry Thomas. E-mail from Pamela J. Meanes, Partner, Thompson Coburn, to Judge Epps (Aug. 18, 2020) (on file with Judge Epps).

113. *Sandra Farragut-Hemphill*, *supra* note 111.

114. E-mail from Pamela J. Meanes, *supra* note 112. The named partners of the firm were Clyde Cahill, Ronnie White, and Sandra Farragut-Hemphill. Cahill practiced criminal law, Hemphill civil law, and White a mixture of criminal and civil. *Id.*

115. *Maniscalco*, *supra* note 107.

116. *Id.*

117. *Senior Judge Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr.*, U.S. CTS. W. DIST. MO., <https://www.mow.uscourts.gov/judges/gaitan> [<https://perma.cc/Q7H9-URQK>]; Interview with Judge Lajuana M. Counts, Magistrate Judge, U.S. Dist. Ct. for the W. Dist. of Mo. (Sept. 24, 2020).

118. Grace Colato & Ben Stueve, *Hon. Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr.*, FED. LAW. (2020), https://www.fedbar.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/TFL_Jan-Feb2020-Hon.Gaitan.pdf [<https://perma.cc/4GNZ-U3UX>]; James W. Tippin, *A Father's Historical Perspective: The Pillars Beneath My Daughter*, 72 J. MO. B. 238 (2016).

119. *Senior Judge Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr.*, *supra* note 117.

120. Colato & Stueve, *supra* note 118.

121. *Id.*

a not-for-profit organization of judges and lawyers “dedicated to developing educational programs to inspire and foster careers in the law among students of color and from other underrepresented groups, from middle school through law school.”¹²²

G. *Hon. Clarence Thomas*

On October 23, 1991, Justice Clarence Thomas became the first Black Missouri lawyer to serve on the Supreme Court of the United States, taking the seat vacated by Justice Thurgood Marshall.¹²³ Thomas was born on June 23, 1948, in Pin Point, Georgia,¹²⁴ raised by his grandparents, and educated at Catholic schools in nearby Savannah, Georgia. “From there, he went to the Benedictine Monastery in northwest Missouri, Conception, Mo. He was a seminarian for a year.”¹²⁵ Thomas graduated from the College of the Holy Cross in 1971 and Yale Law School in 1974. During Thomas’s final year of law school, Yale Law School Dean Guido Calabresi recommended Thomas to Missouri Attorney General John C. Danforth, a graduate of Yale’s Law School and Divinity School. Danforth offered Thomas a job after graduation from law school; Thomas accepted and came to Missouri to study for the Missouri bar examination.¹²⁶ Thomas spent the summer of 1974 at the home of Margaret Bush Wilson, a leader in the civil rights movement and long-time chair of the NAACP, whom Danforth knew through Wilson’s

122. *Our History*, JUST THE BEGINNING, <https://jtb.org/history/> (last visited Oct. 27, 2021). “Through this organization, I was able to spend time with the likes of Judges Constance Baker Motley, Nathaniel Jones, James Parson, Damon Keith, A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr., and many others who started out as civil rights activist[s].” E-mail from Hon. Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr., Senior U.S. District Judge, U.S. Dist. Ct. for the W. Dist. of Mo., to Judge Epps (Aug. 3, 2020) (on file with Judge Epps).

123. Linda Greenhouse, *Thomas Sworn in as 106th Justice*, N.Y. TIMES, Oct. 24, 1991, at A18; R.W. Apple, *Senate Confirms Thomas, 52-48, Ending Week of Bitter Battle; ‘Time For Healing,’ Judge Says*, N.Y. TIMES, Oct. 16, 1991, at A1. See also *African American Judges on the Federal Courts: Thomas, Clarence*, FED. JUD. CTR., <https://www.fjc.gov/history/judges/search/african-american> (last visited Apr. 24, 2021).

124. *About the Court, Current Members*, SUPREME CT. U.S., <https://www.supremecourt.gov/about/biographies.aspx> [<https://perma.cc/E6BE-DN34>].

125. *Hearing on Clarence Thomas, of Maryland, to be Chairman of the EEOC Before the S. Comm. on Lab. and Hum. Res.*, 97th Cong. 2 (1982) (statement of Sen. John C. Danforth). Three members of the Committee were present: Senators Hatch, Eagleton, and Pell, plus Danforth who introduced Thomas to the Committee. *Id.*

126. Thomas told a crowd gathered for Law Day, May 5, 2017, in St. Louis, that the Missouri bar remains his only bar license. One of the authors was present in that crowd.

association with the Danforth Foundation.¹²⁷ In the Attorney General's Office, Thomas primarily represented the state Department of Revenue. According to Danforth, "[Thomas] was an enormously gifted young lawyer, and he was one of the most popular people in our office."¹²⁸

Thomas joined Monsanto as in-house counsel from 1977 to 1979,¹²⁹ then rejoined his former boss and mentor who had been elected to the U.S. Senate in 1976.¹³⁰ Thomas served as a Legislative Assistant to Senator Danforth from 1979 to 1981. Thomas then served as Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education from 1981 to 1982, and later as Chairman of the EEOC from 1982 to 1990.¹³¹ On October 30, 1989, President Bush nominated Thomas to a seat on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. Judge Thomas was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on March 6, 1990.¹³² His services on the D.C. Circuit terminated on October 17, 1991, by appointment to the Supreme Court.¹³³

H. Hon. Carol E. Jackson

In 1992, Carol E. Jackson became the first Black woman U.S. District Judge in the Eastern District of Missouri, later becoming the first Black Chief Judge, a role she served in from 2002 to 2009.¹³⁴ Judge Jackson also holds the distinction of being the first Black U.S. Magistrate Judge in the

127. E-mail from John C. Danforth, former Sen., U.S. Senate, to Judge Epps (July 7, 2020) (on file with Judge Epps).

128. *Id.*

129. *Clarence Thomas*, FED. JUD. CTR., <https://www.fjc.gov/history/judges/thomas-clarence> [<https://perma.cc/G86Z-TH98>].

130. *Id.*; *Danforth, John Claggett*, BIOGRAPHICAL DIRECTORY OF THE U.S. CONGRESS, <https://bioguide.congress.gov/search/bio/D000030> [<https://perma.cc/8FSE-J6JA>].

131. *Clarence Thomas*, *supra* note 129.

132. *Id.*

133. *Id.* Years after his confirmation to the Supreme Court, at an event sponsored by the Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis, Thomas turned to Danforth and said, "[y]ou are the reason why I'm here." Jim Salter, *Clarence Thomas: Sen. Danforth is 'the Reason Why I'm Here'*, ASSOCIATED PRESS (May 5, 2017), <https://apnews.com/article/6091a9564d4b4a4d98c6145ecda02901>.

134. *Retirement of United States District Judge Carol E. Jackson*, U.S. DIST. CT. E. DIST. MO. (Aug. 16, 2017), <https://www.moed.uscourts.gov/news/2017/retirement-united-states-district-judge-carol-e-jackson> [<https://perma.cc/KD25-6DDQ>]; interview with Hon. Carol E. Jackson (ret.), former U.S. Dist. Judge, E. Dist. of Mo. (Sept. 27, 2020). Judges Jackson and Gaitan simultaneously served as chief judges of their respective federal trial courts between 2007 and 2009. E-mail from Hon. Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr., Senior U.S. Dist. Judge, U.S. Dist. Ct. for the W. Dist. of Mo., to Judge Epps (July 5, 2021) (on file with Judge Epps).

Eastern District of Missouri.¹³⁵ She is a graduate of Wellesley College and the University of Michigan Law School.¹³⁶ “Before her time on the bench Judge Jackson practiced with the law firm of Thompson Mitchell (now Thompson Coburn) and with Mallinckrodt, Inc.”¹³⁷ Chief Judge Rodney W. Sippel, reflecting on Jackson’s time as Chief Judge following her retirement, remarked, “Judge Jackson has been a model of civility, professionalism, and service to all of us on this Court, and her tenure as Chief Judge set a tone of collegiality within the Court that we still strive to meet today.”¹³⁸

I. *Hon. Ronnie L. White*

In 1995, Judge Ronnie L. White became the first Black judge to serve on the Supreme Court of Missouri, and in 2003 the first Black Chief Justice.¹³⁹ Before the Supreme Court, he spent time on the Missouri Court of Appeals and in private practice. He was later confirmed as a U.S. District Judge on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri following his nomination by President Obama in 2014.¹⁴⁰

A native of St. Louis, White graduated from University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law and passed the Missouri bar in 1983.¹⁴¹ “White served as a trial attorney for the public defender’s office, in both the city of St. Louis and St. Louis County;” spent about six years in private practice; and served in the Missouri House of Representatives.¹⁴² “While in office, he served as the chairman of the House Judiciary and Ethics Committee and the Civil and Criminal Justice Committee.”¹⁴³ Notably, “Judge White has received several awards and honors throughout his judicial career from various organizations . . . [and] has also been a member of numerous associations and led multiple commissions.”¹⁴⁴

135. *Retirement of United States District Judge Carol E. Jackson*, *supra* note 134. Interview with Hon. Carol E. Jackson (ret.), *supra* note 134.

136. *Retirement of United States District Judge Carol E. Jackson*, *supra* note 134.

137. *Id.*

138. *Id.*

139. Hannah Siegel, *Judge Ronnie L. White*, MO. CTS. (2017), <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=120180> [<https://perma.cc/JH8H-GK63>].

140. *Id.*

141. *Id.*

142. *Id.*

143. *Id.*

144. *Id.*

J. Hon. David L. Vincent, III

David Lee Vincent, III became the first Black appointed Circuit Judge on the St. Louis County Circuit Court in 1997.¹⁴⁵ He earned a degree in electrical engineering from Tennessee State University and a law degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.¹⁴⁶ Before appointment to the bench, he served as an Assistant Circuit Attorney from 1988 to 1993.¹⁴⁷ He served on the Board of Governors of The Missouri Bar from 2008 to 2010, and is active with BAMSL's high school mock trial competition (for Normandy and Marquette high schools) and the Mound City Bar Association.¹⁴⁸

K. Hon. Michael B. Calvin

In 1999, Judge Michael B. Calvin became the first Black to serve as Presiding Judge for the City of St. Louis Circuit Court. Born in Nashville in 1951 and raised in St. Louis by his father, a pediatric psychiatrist, and mother, a special education teacher, Calvin graduated from Beaumont High School, Monmouth College, and Saint Louis University School of Law.¹⁴⁹ He began his legal career working with Frankie Muse Freeman, a Black civil rights attorney and the first woman appointed to the United States

145. *Honorable David Lee Vincent, III*, STL CTY. CTS., <http://stlcountycourts.com/judges.php?var=9> [https://perma.cc/5NNS-AWUE]; Interview with Eric Kendall Banks, Attorney at Law, Banks Law LLC (Oct. 9, 2021). Before an African American became a circuit judge in St. Louis County (with a significant Black population), Mary Ellen Young was elected Circuit Judge for Cass and Johnson counties, 17th Circuit Court, in 1994, serving one six-year term—in an area that was about 3% Black. See MO. SEC'Y STATE, OFFICIAL MANUAL OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI 1999 – 2000, at 233 (photo. reprinted 2009) (2000); U.S. DEP'T COM., *Social and Economic Characteristics, Missouri, in 1990 CENSUS OF POPULATION*, 1990 CP-2-27, at 19 (Cass County), 23 (Johnson County) (1993).

146. *Honorable David Lee Vincent, III*, *supra* note 145.

147. *David Lee Vincent, III*, YOUR Mo. JUDGES, <http://www.yourmissourijudges.org/judges/vincent/> [https://perma.cc/CSD7-PFTA].

148. *Id.*

149. Gloria S. Ross, *Michael B. Calvin: Judge Had the Gift of Persuasion; A Reputation for Fairness*, ST. LOUIS PUB. RADIO (Dec. 2, 2014, 11:33 AM), <https://news.stlpublicradio.org/government-politics-issues/2014-12-02/michael-b-calvin-judge-had-the-gift-of-persuasion-a-reputation-for-fairness> [https://perma.cc/AU4R-4WBW].

Commission on Civil Rights.¹⁵⁰ According to Freeman, Calvin “was very efficient . . . [they] worked well together, and [she] was especially proud when he became a judge.”¹⁵¹ Calvin spent three years in private practice before becoming an Associate Circuit Judge in the City of St. Louis in 1979 at age twenty-eight. He became a Circuit Judge in 1988, served as Presiding Judge from 1999 to 2000, and retired in 2008. During that time, he handled some of the city’s most contentious and important cases. “Judge Calvin’s cases ranged from murders that carried the death penalty to multi-million-dollar liability cases.”¹⁵² After retiring from the bench, Judge Calvin worked as of counsel to Spencer Fane Britt & Browne, where he focused on mediation and arbitration.¹⁵³ He died in 2014 at age sixty-three.

L. Hon. Lisa White Hardwick

Judge Lisa White Hardwick was the first Black woman to sit on any district of the Missouri Court of Appeals.¹⁵⁴ Hardwick earned a journalism degree at the University of Missouri and a law degree from Harvard Law School.¹⁵⁵ She first became a Circuit Judge in Jackson County in January 2000.¹⁵⁶ In 2001, she was appointed to the Missouri Court of Appeals for the Western District of Missouri, where she served as Chief Judge from 2010 to 2012.¹⁵⁷ Hardwick was also the first Black lawyer and first Black partner ever hired by Shook, Hardy & Bacon.¹⁵⁸ She was elected to the Jackson County Legislature, where she served from 1993 to 2000, while a partner at Shook.¹⁵⁹ The recipient of several awards and honors, Judge Hardwick has led a distinguished career, marked by contributions to several

150. For more on Frankie Muse Freeman, see Hon. Nicole Colbert-Botchway, *Frankie Muse Freeman, Esquire: The Legacy of the First Female United States Commissioner of Civil Rights and Presidential Scholar Commissioner*, 67 WASH. U.J.L. POL’Y 15 (2022) (also published in this volume).

151. Ross, *supra* note 149.

152. *Id.*

153. *Id.*

154. Teitelman, *supra* note 60.

155. *Judge Lisa White Hardwick*, MO. CTS., <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=503> [<https://perma.cc/2E68-WQG3>].

156. *Id.*

157. *Id.*

158. Alan Scher Zagier, *Diversity & Inclusion 2021: Lisa White Hardwick*, MO. LAWS. MEDIA (Mar. 20, 2021), <https://molawyersmedia.com/2021/03/22/diversity-inclusion-2021-lisa-white-hardwick/> [<https://perma.cc/3LA8-FXYL>].

159. *Judge Lisa White Hardwick*, *supra* note 155.

civic and charitable organizations.¹⁶⁰ She now serves as Co-Chair of the Supreme Court of Missouri Commission on Racial and Ethnic Fairness.¹⁶¹

M. Hon. Kathy A. Surratt-States

Kathy Surratt-States, now Chief Judge for the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Missouri,¹⁶² became the first Black Bankruptcy Judge within the Eighth Circuit when appointed in 2003¹⁶³—one of only eight Black Bankruptcy Judges in the country at the time.¹⁶⁴ Surratt-States completed her education at Oklahoma City University and Washington University School of Law.¹⁶⁵ She then clerked for U.S. Bankruptcy Judge James J. Barta.¹⁶⁶ Surratt-States practiced in St. Louis at the commercial-litigation firm Campbell & Coyne P.C. until 1998, when she joined Ziercher & Hocker P.C., a mid-sized firm also in St. Louis.¹⁶⁷ She became a partner there in 2000.¹⁶⁸ In 2001, after a merger, Surratt-States “joined the insolvency practice group at Husch [Blackwell], where she focused on corporate clients in bankruptcy and insolvency related matters.”¹⁶⁹ Judge Surratt-States’s commitment to the St. Louis community has resulted in several major appointments across the region.¹⁷⁰

160. *Id.*

161. See Hon. Lisa White Hardwick, *Justice for All: An Overview of the Supreme Court of Missouri's Commission on Racial and Ethnic Fairness*, 67 WASH. U.J.L. & POL'Y 111 (2022).

162. Interview with Hon. Kathy Surratt-States, Chief Judge, U.S. Bankr. Ct., E. Dist. of Mo. (July 17, 2020).

163. Jermaine Watson, *Judicial Profile: Hon. Kathy A. Surratt-States*, FED. BAR ASSOC., <https://www.fedbar.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Surratt-StatesAug2010-pdf-3.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/G5BW-VSQC>]; Interview with Hon. Kathy Surratt-States, *supra* note 162.

164. Interview with Hon. Kathy Surratt-States, *supra* note 162.

165. Watson, *supra* note 163.

166. *Id.*

167. *Id.*

168. Interview with Hon. Kathy Surratt-States, *supra* note 162.

169. Watson, *supra* note 163.

170. See *id.*

N. Hon. George W. Draper, III

In 2011, George W. Draper, III became Missouri's second Black judge to serve on the Supreme Court of Missouri, later presiding as Chief Justice for two years.¹⁷¹ From 2000 to 2006, Judge Draper was on the Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District,¹⁷² where he became the first Black Chief Judge in 2005.¹⁷³ As he was previously an Associate Circuit Judge and Circuit Judge, Judge Draper is one of two judges in modern history to serve at all levels of Missouri's judiciary.¹⁷⁴

Draper's parents came to Missouri in 1949 so Draper's father could teach at Lincoln University's Law School.¹⁷⁵ Later, his father served as chief of the Criminal Division in the Missouri Attorney General's Office in the 1950s,¹⁷⁶ and then as a federal judge in Washington, D.C.¹⁷⁷ Draper completed his education at Morehouse College and Howard University School of Law.¹⁷⁸ He served as a law clerk under Judge Shellie Bowers, District of Columbia Superior Court, from 1981 to 1982, and in the Office of Circuit Attorney for the City of St. Louis from 1984 to 1994.¹⁷⁹ Draper's

171. Chris King, *Judge George Draper is Newest Chief Justice of Missouri*, ST. LOUIS PUB. RADIO (July 1, 2019), <https://news.stlpublicradio.org/post/judge-george-draper-newest-chief-justice-missouri#stream/0> [<https://perma.cc/7YAH-6F28>].

172. *Chief Justice George W. Draper, III*, MO. CTS., <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=50536> [<https://perma.cc/3WCE-J32R>]; King, *supra* note 171.

173. King, *supra* note 171; *Chief Justice George W. Draper, III*, *supra* note 172.

174. King, *supra* note 171; E-mail from Hon. Jon R. Gray (ret.), Partner, Shook, Hardy & Bacon, to Judge Epps (Sept. 29, 2020) (on file with Judge Epps).

175. Ashley Byrd, *Chief Justice of the Missouri Supreme Court Notes His Own Historic Tenure, Court's Bicentennial*, MISSOURINET (Jan. 22, 2020), <https://www.missourinet.com/2020/01/22/chief-justice-of-the-missouri-supreme-court-notes-his-own-historical-tenure-courts-bicentennial-audio-and-text/> [<https://perma.cc/G3ZP-DNDM>].

176. *Id.* Attorney General Tom Eagleton named "George Draper the state's first [B]lack assistant attorney general." JOSHUA M. GLASSER, EIGHTEEN-DAY RUNNING MATE: MCGOVERN, EAGLETON, AND A CAMPAIGN IN CRISIS 60 (2012).

177. Report of Recommendations and Chief Judge Designations and Presidential Appointments to the D.C. Ct. App. and the Superior Ct. of D.C.: May 8, 1975 to September 30, 2016, D.C. Judicial Nomination Commission, at 5 (available at <https://dccouncil.us/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/jps2.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/56ZN-YK99>]).

178. *Chief Justice George W. Draper, III*, *supra* note 172.

179. *Id.* Draper was promoted to team leader in 1990 and first assistant in 1993. King, *supra* note 171; *Chief Justice George W. Draper, III*, *supra* note 172.

wife, the Honorable Judy P. Draper (ret.), served as an Associate Circuit Judge in St. Louis County from 2004 to 2018.¹⁸⁰

O. Hon. Thomas H. Newton

In 2008, Thomas H. Newton became the first Black appointed Chief Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District. He and Judge Nannette A. Baker, then Chief Judge for the Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, made history that year as it was the first time two African Americans simultaneously served as chief judges for two of the three districts of the Missouri Court of Appeals.¹⁸¹

In 1993, Newton was appointed a Circuit Judge on the Jackson County Circuit Court.¹⁸² Judge Newton spent six years on the Circuit Court before taking his historic place on the Missouri Court of Appeals, as noted above.¹⁸³ Judge Newton served as Chief Judge from 2008 to 2010. A graduate of Howard University—both undergraduate and law school—Newton began his legal career as an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney in the Jackson County Prosecutor's Office.¹⁸⁴ After three years there, Judge Newton joined the United States Attorney's Office in 1987, where he practiced until his appointment to the bench in 1993 by Governor Carnahan.¹⁸⁵ Judge Newton retired in 2021.¹⁸⁶

180. *Judy P. Draper*, BALLOTPEdia, https://ballotpedia.org/Judy_P._Draper [<https://perma.cc/Y7WD-FEP6>] (noting Judy Draper served as an associate circuit judge for the 21st Circuit Court in Missouri from 2004 to 2018).

181. *Missouri Court of Appeals Makes History with Two Black Chief Judges*, MO. CTS. (July 1, 2008), <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=89955> [<https://perma.cc/KRT6-KE5F>].

182. *Id.*

183. *Id.*

184. *Id.*

185. *Thomas H. Newton to Retire as Judge of the Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District*, Mo. Cts. <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=178298> (last visited Oct. 8, 2021).

186. *Id.*

P. Hon. Willie J. Epps, Jr.

In 2017, Willie J. Epps, Jr. became the first Black U.S. Magistrate Judge in the Western District of Missouri.¹⁸⁷ He is a graduate of Amherst College and Harvard Law School.¹⁸⁸ He began his legal career in service to our country as an Air Force Judge Advocate, Special Assistant U.S. Attorney, and then Assistant Special Counsel for the Waco Investigation.¹⁸⁹ Later, he was named partner at two law firms and head of litigation at a financial services firm.¹⁹⁰ Judge Epps is a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers, serves on the Executive Committee of the National Conference of Federal Trial Judges, and teaches annually at Harvard Law School's Trial Advocacy Workshop.¹⁹¹

Q. Hon. Lajuana M. Counts

Lajuana M. Counts has served as a Magistrate Judge for the United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri since 2018.¹⁹² She is the first Black woman to serve as a federal judge in the Western District, and also the first Black woman to serve as an Assistant United States Attorney in the Western District. Counts completed her education at the University of Missouri and University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law,¹⁹³ and then clerked for the Honorable Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr. on the Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District.¹⁹⁴ Counts served in various

187. *Willie J. Epps Jr. Selected to Serve as U.S. Magistrate Judge*, ST. LOUIS AM. (June 2, 2017), http://www.stlamerican.com/business/people_on_the_move/willie-j-epps-jr-selected-to-serve-as-u-s-magistrate-judge/article_5e3f68c2-4644-11e7-8a63-8387d69d89cd.html.

188. *Magistrate Judge Willie J. Epps, Jr.*, U.S. CTS. W. DIST. MO., <https://www.mow.uscourts.gov/judges/epps> [<https://perma.cc/76QC-HKQK>].

189. William H. Freivogel & Terry Ganey, *Danforth's Observer at Trial Keeps a Very Low Profile; Willie James Epps, Jr. of St. Louis Won't Even Tell How He Spells His Name*, ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH, July 13, 2000, at A9.

190. Rebecca Rivas, *Willie J. Epps Jr. is 2016 Corporate Executive of the Year*, ST. LOUIS AM. (Oct. 27, 2016), http://www.stlamerican.com/news/local_news/willie-j-epps-jr-is-2016-corporate-executive-of-the-year/article_eba30d0c-9bc4-11e6-bebd-1798df85e73a.html.

191. *Willie Epps, Jr.*, A.B.A., <https://connect.americanbar.org/network/members/profile?UserKey=25c6552a-73d3-4881-b4b7-e1f6070033d3> [<https://perma.cc/KSX5-G3L4>].

192. *Magistrate Judge Lajuana M. Counts*, U.S. CTS. W. DIST. MO., <https://www.mow.uscourts.gov/judges/counts> [<https://perma.cc/PU4E-GEPD>].

193. *Id.*

194. Colato & Stueve, *supra* note 118.

capacities as an Assistant United States Attorney for nearly thirty years, including Appellate Coordinator and Appellate Unit Chief.¹⁹⁵ In this role she handled a variety of white collar and narcotics cases, presenting over four hundred cases to the Eighth Circuit.¹⁹⁶ Counts has also had leadership roles in several community organizations, including the National Bar Association, the Association for Women Lawyers of Greater Kansas City, the UMKC Women's Council, and Lawyers Encouraging Academic Performance, a not-for-profit foundation.¹⁹⁷ She was also Jackson County Bar Association President.¹⁹⁸

R. Hon. Gloria Clark Reno

On October 10, 2018, Judge Gloria Clark Reno was unanimously elected by her peers as Presiding Judge of the St. Louis County Circuit Court, becoming the first Black “to lead the 21st Judicial Circuit since it was established in 1815.”¹⁹⁹ A graduate of the University of Missouri-St. Louis and Saint Louis University School of Law, she served as a Municipal Judge for the City of Northwoods from 1994 to 2002, and was appointed an Associate Circuit Judge for St. Louis County by Governor Bob Holden in 2002.²⁰⁰ Governor Jay Nixon appointed her a St. Louis County Circuit Judge in 2009. In January 2019, Judge Reno and Judge Robin Ransom, then Presiding Judge for the City of St. Louis, made history as Black women who simultaneously led “two of the busiest courthouses in Missouri.”²⁰¹

195. *Lajuana M Counts*, BLOOMBERG, <https://www.bloomberg.com/profile/person/20772551> [<https://perma.cc/9X89-LL8P>]; *Magistrate Judge Lajuana M. Counts*, *supra* note 192.

196. *Speakers' Bios*, U. KAN., https://kupmc.ku.edu/events/inspiringwomen/2015_bios [<https://perma.cc/5KSJ-DDPF>].

197. *Awards*, UMKC SCH. L., <https://law.umkc.edu/alumni-and-giving/awards.html> [<https://perma.cc/KF2V-S6M9>].

198. Interview with Judge Lajuana M. Counts, Magistrate Judge, U.S. Dist. Ct. for the W. Dist. of Mo. (Sept. 24, 2020).

199. *Judge Gloria Clark Reno Elected Presiding Judge of St. Louis County 21st Judicial Circuit*, ST. LOUIS CTY. CIR. CT., <https://wp.stlcountycourts.com/2018/10/judge-gloria-clark-reno-elected-presiding-judge-of-st-louis-county-21st-judicial-circuit/> [<https://perma.cc/U7XZ-TSXZ>].

200. *Id.*

201. Rachel Lippmann, *Making History: African-American Women to Head Two of the State's Largest Courts*, ST. LOUIS PUB. RADIO (Dec. 31, 2018, 2:55 AM), <http://news.stlpublicradio.org/post/making-history-african-american-women-head-two-states-largest-courts> [<https://perma.cc/N8NY-HH4J>].

S. Hon. Robin Ransom

For the first time in Missouri history, a Black woman, Robin Ransom, now serves on the Missouri Supreme Court. A graduate of Rutgers University and University of Missouri School of Law, Ransom began her legal career as an attorney in the St. Louis County Public Defender's Office. She worked there from 1992 to 1995, and then with the St. Louis County Prosecuting Attorney's Office from 1995 to 1996.²⁰² From 1996 to 2002, Ransom was a Staff Attorney for the St. Louis County Family Court. Judge Ransom's first judicial appointment was as Family Court Commissioner in 2002.²⁰³ Governor Matt Blunt appointed Ransom as Circuit Judge in 2008. She was next appointed to the Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, by Governor Mike Parson in 2019, and then finally to the Supreme Court by Governor Parson in 2021.²⁰⁴ Judge Ransom reported she enjoyed the Court of Appeals and found the environment "very serene and peaceful," which agrees with her temperament.²⁰⁵ She said that she appreciated the luxury of being able to "read and research all day long pretty much without interruption and really get a handle on so many different areas" that she would "never have touched being a circuit judge."²⁰⁶ Judge Ransom, the latest first among trailblazing Black Missouri judges, contends "it's OK to be the first; you just want to make sure you're not the last. I don't care what it is, be it your gender or your race, you want to go in and knock it out of the park and do the best that you can, so the doors remain open for others to come behind you."²⁰⁷

202. *Judge Robin Ransom*, MO. CTS., <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=57484> [<https://perma.cc/G39V-F46D>].

203. *Id.*

204. Jeanne Kuang, *Parson Appoints Robin Ransom, First Black Woman to Serve on Missouri Supreme Court*, KAN. CITY STAR (May 24, 2021, 9:05 AM), <https://www.kansascity.com/news/politics-government/article251653058.html>; *Judge Robin Ransom*, *supra* note 202.

205. David Baugher, *Robin Ransom - Missouri Court of Appeals Eastern District*, MO. LAWS. MEDIA (Apr. 25, 2019), <https://molawyersmedia.com/2019/04/25/robin-ransom-missouri-court-of-appeals-eastern-district/> [<https://perma.cc/K8FP-AM79>].

206. *Id.*

207. Mike Miller, *A Conversation with Judge Robin Ransom*, ST. LOUIS MAG. (Sept. 13, 2021), <https://www.stlmag.com/news/judge-robin-ransom-conversation/> [<https://perma.cc/JDM9-QZRY>].

CONCLUSION

Black judges in Missouri did not exist before 1900, and only one existed at the time the Mound City Bar Association was founded in 1922. Even then, it appears only six Black judges ever presided in Missouri before 1980. This backdrop makes today's gains even more extraordinary, as Black judges now appear at every level of the State and federal judiciary in Missouri. It is our hope the future brings even greater diversity, equity, and inclusion—on the bench, in the practice of law in general, and across the nation. Perhaps one day soon, today's unprecedented gains will themselves seem less significant.

Appendix A: List of Firsts²⁰⁸

| <i>First Black ...</i> | Name | Year |
|--|--|-------------|
| Missouri Lawyer | John H. Johnson | 1871 |
| Missouri Lawyer, Full-Time Practice | Albert Burgess | 1877 |
| To Serve in Judicial Capacity in Missouri | Judge Walter Moran Farmer (Special Judge in the St. Louis Municipal Court) | 1900 |
| Bar Association West of the Mississippi | Mound City Bar Association | 1922 |
| Justice of the Peace, Missouri | Judge Crittenden Clark | 1922 |
| Woman Attorney, Missouri | Dorothy L. Freeman | 1942 |
| Woman Practicing, Kansas City | Leona Pouncey Thurman | 1949 |
| Judge, Kansas City | Judge Carl Roman Johnson | 1955 |
| State Court Judge, Missouri | Theodore "Ted" McMillian (City of St. Louis, Circuit Judge) | 1956 |
| Judge, St. Louis Municipal Court | Judge Nathan B. "Ben" Young | 1965 |
| Judge, Circuit Court, Jackson County | Judge Lewis W. Clymer | 1970 |
| Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals | Judge Theodore "Ted" McMillian (Eastern District) | 1972 |
| Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit | Judge Theodore "Ted" McMillian | 1978 |

208. Appendix A and B are adapted from Hon. Willie Epps, Jr., *Black Lawyers of Missouri: 150 Years of Progress and Promise*, 86 MO. L. REV. 1 (2021).

| <i>First Black ...</i> | Name | Year |
|--|--|-------------|
| Federal Trial Judge, St. Louis (U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Missouri) | Judge Clyde S. Cahill, Jr. | 1980 |
| Woman Judge, Missouri Circuit Court | Judge Evelyn Marie Baker | 1983 |
| Administrative Judge, U.S Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, Missouri | Judge Sandra Moore | 1983 |
| Woman in Judicial Position, Jackson County | Commissioner Mildred L. Watson (Family Court Commission) | 1984 |
| U.S. Magistrate Judge, Missouri | Judge Carol E. Jackson (Eastern District of Missouri) | 1986 |
| Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District | Judge Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr. | 1986 |
| Missouri Lawyer, U.S. Supreme Court | Justice Clarence Thomas | 1991 |
| Judge, U.S. District Court, Western District of Missouri | Judge Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr. (U.S. District Judge) | 1991 |
| Judge, Circuit Court, St. Louis County | Judge Sandra Farragut-Hemphill | 1991 |
| Woman Judge, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Missouri | Judge Carol E. Jackson | 1992 |
| Judge, Supreme Court of Missouri | Judge Ronnie L. White | 1995 |
| Judge, Circuit Court, St. Louis County | Judge David Lee Vincent, III | 1997 |
| Presiding Judge, Circuit Court, City of St. Louis | Presiding Judge Michael B. Calvin | 1999 |

| <i>First Black ...</i> | Name | Year |
|--|---|-------------|
| Woman Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals | Judge Lisa White Hardwick (Western District) | 2001 |
| Chief Judge, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Missouri | Chief Judge Carol E. Jackson | 2002 |
| Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Missouri | Chief Justice Ronnie L. White, Sr. | 2003 |
| U.S. Bankruptcy Judge, Eighth Circuit | Judge Kathy Surratt-States | 2003 |
| Chief Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District | Chief Judge George W. Draper, III | 2005 |
| Chief Judge, U.S. District Court, Western District of Missouri | Chief Judge Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr. | 2007 |
| Judge, Administrative Hearing Commission | Nimrod T. "Rod" Chapel, Jr. | 2007 |
| Woman Chief Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District | Chief Judge Nannette A. Baker | 2008 |
| Chief Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District | Chief Judge Thomas H. Newton | 2008 |
| U.S. Magistrate Judge, Western District of Missouri | Judge Willie J. Epps, Jr. | 2017 |
| Woman Judge, U.S. District Court, Western District of Missouri | Judge Lajuana M. Counts (U.S. Magistrate Judge) | 2018 |
| Presiding Judge, Circuit Court, St. Louis County | Presiding Judge Gloria Clark Reno | 2019 |
| Woman Judge, Supreme Court of Missouri | Judge Robin Ransom | 2021 |

| Appendix B: Black Judges of Missouri ²⁰⁹ | | |
|---|--|--|
| Judge | Judicial Position | Other Judicial Service |
| Supreme Court of the United States | | |
| Hon. Clarence Thomas | Associate Justice, 1991 to Present | Chair, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1982 to 1990; Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, 1990 to 1991 |
| U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit | | |
| Hon. Theodore McMillian | Circuit Judge, 1978 to 2003; Senior Circuit Judge, 2003 to 2006 | Circuit Judge, City of St. Louis Circuit Court, 1956 to 1972; Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, 1972 to 1978 |
| Supreme Court of Missouri | | |
| Hon. Ronnie Lee White | Judge, 1995 to 2007; Chief Justice, 2003 to 2005 | Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, 1994 to 1995; U.S. District Judge, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri, 2014 to Present |

209. *See id.*

| Supreme Court of Missouri | | |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Hon. Justice George W. Draper, III | Judge, 2011 to Present Chief Justice, 2019 to 2021 | Associate Circuit Judge, St. Louis County Circuit Court, 1994 to 1998; Circuit Judge, St. Louis County Circuit Court, 1998 to 2000; Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, 2000 to 2011; Chief Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, 2004 to 2005 Municipal Judge, Bellefontaine Neighbors Municipal Court, 2019 to Present |
| Hon. Robin Ransom | Judge, 2021 to Present | Family Court Commissioner, City of St. Louis Circuit Court, 2002 to 2008; Circuit Judge, City of St. Louis Circuit Court, 2008 to 2019; Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, 2019 to 2021 |
| U.S. Court for International Trade | | |
| Hon. Scovel Richardson | Judge, 1957 to 1982 | Chair, U.S. Parole Board, 1954 to 1957 |

| U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri | | |
|--|--|--|
| Hon. Clyde S. Cahill, Jr. | District Judge, 1980 to 1992; Senior Judge, 1992 to 2004 | Circuit Judge, City of St. Louis Circuit Court, 1975 to 1980 |
| Hon. Carol E. Jackson | Magistrate Judge, 1986 to 1992; District Judge, 1992 to 2017; Chief District Judge, 2002 to 2009 | |
| Hon. Charles Alexander Shaw | District Judge, 1993 to 2009; Senior Judge 2009 to 2020 | Circuit Judge, City of St. Louis Circuit Court, 1987 to 1993 |
| Hon. Henry Edward Autrey | District Judge, 2002 to Present | Associate Circuit Judge, City of St. Louis Circuit Court, 1986 to 1997; Circuit Judge, City of St. Louis Circuit Court, 1997 to 2002 |
| Hon. Ronnie Lee White | District Judge, 2014 to Present | Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, 1994 to 1995; Judge, Supreme Court of Missouri, 1995 to 2007; Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Missouri, 2003 to 2005 |

| U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri | | |
|--|---|--|
| Hon. Nannette A. Baker | Magistrate Judge, 2011 to Present; Chief Magistrate Judge, 2017 to 2020 | Circuit Judge, City of St. Louis Circuit Court, 1999 to 2004; Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, 2004 to 2011; Chief Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, 2008 to 2009 |
| Hon. Shirley A. Padmore Mensah | Magistrate Judge, 2012 to Present; Chief Magistrate Judge, 2021 to present | |
| Hon. Noelle C. Collins | Magistrate Judge, 2013 to Present | |
| U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Missouri | | |
| Hon. Kathy A. Surratt-States | Bankruptcy Judge, 2003 to Present; Chief Bankruptcy Judge, 2013 to Present | |
| U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri | | |
| Hon. Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr. | District Judge, 1991 to 2014; Chief District Judge, 2007 to 2014; Senior District Judge, 2014 to Present | Circuit Judge, Jackson County Circuit Court, 1980 to 1986; Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District, 1986 to 1991 |

| U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri | | |
|--|---|---|
| Hon. Brian C. Wimes | District Judge (for both the Eastern and Western Districts of Missouri by statutory designation), 2012 to Present | Jackson County Drug Court Commissioner, 2001 to 2007; Circuit Judge, Jackson County Circuit Court, 2007 to 2012 |
| Hon. Willie J. Epps, Jr. | Magistrate Judge, 2017 to Present | |
| Hon. Lajuana M. Counts | Magistrate Judge, 2018 to Present | |
| Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District | | |
| Hon. Theodore McMillian | Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, 1972 to 1978 | |
| Hon. Ronnie Lee White | Judge, 1994 to 1995 | Judge, Supreme Court of Missouri, 1995 to 2007; Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Missouri, 2003 to 2005; U.S. District Judge, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri, 2014 to Present |
| Hon. Justice George W. Draper, III | Judge, 2000 to 2011; Chief Judge, 2004 to 2005 | |

| Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District | | |
|---|--|--|
| Hon. Booker T. Shaw | Judge, 2002 to 2009; Chief Judge, 2006 to 2007 | Associate Circuit Judge, City of St. Louis Circuit Court, 1983 to 1995; Circuit Judge, City of St. Louis Circuit Court, 1995 to 2002 |
| Hon. Angela Turner Quigless | Judge, 2012 to Present; Chief Judge, 2014 to 2015 | Associate Circuit Judge, City of St. Louis Circuit Court, 1996 to 2003; Circuit Judge, City of St. Louis Circuit Court, 2003 to 2012 |
| Hon. Robin Ransom | Judge, 2019 to 2021 | Family Court Commissioner, City of St. Louis Circuit Court, 2002 to 2008; Circuit Judge, City of St. Louis Circuit Court, 2008 to 2019; Judge, Supreme Court of Missouri, 2021 to present |

| Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District | | |
|---|---|---|
| Hon. Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr. | Judge, 1986 to 1991 | Circuit Judge, Jackson County Circuit Court, 1980 to 1986; U.S. District Judge, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri, 1991 to 2014; Chief U.S. District Judge, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri, 2007 to 2014; Senior U.S. District Judge, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri 2014 to Present |
| Hon. Thomas H. Newton | Judge, 1999 to 2021; Chief Judge, 2008 to 2010 | Circuit Judge, Jackson County Circuit Court, 1993 to 1999 |
| Hon. Lisa White Hardwick | Judge, 2001 to Present; Chief Judge, 2010 to 2012 | Circuit Judge, Jackson County Circuit Court, 2000 to 2001 |
| City of St. Louis Circuit Court | | |
| Hon. Theodore McMillian | Circuit Judge, 1956 to 1972 | Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, 1972 to 1978; Circuit Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit, 1978 to 2003; Senior Circuit Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit, 2003 to 2006 |

| City of St. Louis Circuit Court | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Hon. Daniel T. Tillman | Circuit Judge, 1970 to 1997 | |
| Hon. Clyde S. Cahill, Jr. | Circuit Judge, 1975 to 1980 | U.S. District Judge, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri, 1980 to 1992; Senior U.S. District Judge, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri, 1992 to 2004 |
| Hon. Evelyn Marie Baker | Circuit Judge, 1983 to 2008 | |
| Hon. Charles Alexander Shaw | Circuit Judge, 1987 to 1993 | U.S. District Judge, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri, 1993 to 2009; Senior U.S. District Judge, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri, 2009 to 2020 |
| Hon. Michael B. Calvin | Magistrate Judge, 1978 to 1979; Associate Circuit Judge, 1979 to 1988; Circuit Judge, 1988 to 2008; Presiding Judge, 1999 to 2000 | |
| Hon. David C. Mason | Circuit Judge, 1991 to Present | |

| City of St. Louis Circuit Court | | |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| Hon. Jimmie M. Edwards | Circuit Judge, 1992 to 2017 | |
| Hon. Booker T. Shaw | Associate Circuit Judge, 1983 to 1995; Circuit Judge, 1995 to 2002 | Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, 2002 to 2009; Chief Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, 2006 to 2007 |
| Hon. Henry Edward Autrey | Associate Circuit Judge, 1986 to 1997; Circuit Judge, 1997 to 2002 | U.S. District Judge, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri, 2002 to Present |
| Hon. Nannette A. Baker | Circuit Judge, 1999 to 2004 | Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, 2004 to 2011; Chief Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, 2008 to 2009; U.S. Magistrate Judge, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri, 2011 to Present; Chief U.S. Magistrate Judge, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri, 2017 to 2020 |
| Hon. Donald McCullin | Circuit Judge, 1999 to 2011 | Municipal Judge, Ferguson Municipal Court, 2015 to 2016 |

| City of St. Louis Circuit Court | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Hon. Angela Turner Quigless | Associate Circuit Judge, 1996 to 2003; Circuit Judge, 2003 to 2012 | Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, 2012 to Present; Chief Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District 2014 to 2015 |
| Hon. Robin Ransom | Family Court Commissioner, 2002 to 2008; Circuit Judge, 2008 to 2019; Presiding Judge, 2019 | Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Eastern District, 2019 to 2021; Judge, Supreme Court of Missouri, 2021 to Present |
| Hon. Michael Noble | Drug Court Commissioner, 2007 to 2013; Associate Circuit Judge, 2013 to 2015; Circuit Judge, 2015 to Present | |
| Hon. Paula P. Bryant | Associate Circuit Judge, 2004 to 2016; Circuit Judge, 2016 to Present | |
| Hon. Annette Llewellyn | Circuit Judge, 2018 to Present | |
| Hon. Calea Stovall-Reid | Associate Circuit Judge, 2003 to 2019; Circuit Judge, 2019 to Present | |

| City of St. Louis Circuit Court | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Hon. Virgil Lucas | Magistrate Judge, 1978 to 1982 | |
| Hon. Harold F. Fullwood | Magistrate Judge, 1978 to 1979; Associate Circuit Judge, 1979 to 1986 | Police Judge, 1973 to 1978; |
| Hon. Iris J. Goliday Ferguson | Associate Circuit Judge, 1993 to 2006 | Municipal Judge, Kinloch Municipal Court; Municipal Judge, Pagedale Municipal Court |
| Hon. Barbara T. Peebles | Drug Court Commissioner, 1998 to 2000; Associate Circuit Judge, 2000 to Present | |
| Hon. Nicole Colbert-Botchway | Associate Circuit Judge, 2015 to Present | |
| Hon. Lynne R. Perkins | Associate Circuit Judge, 2017 to Present | |
| Hon. Craig K. Higgins | Associate Circuit Judge, 2019 to Present | |
| Hon. Anne-Marie Clarke | Juvenile Division Hearing Officer, 1986 to 1998; Family Court Commissioner, 1998 to 2019 | |
| Hon. Rochelle M. Woodiest | Drug Court Commissioner, 2013 to Present | |

| St. Louis County Circuit Court | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Hon. David Lee Vincent, III | Circuit Judge, 1997 to Present | |
| Hon. Michael Jamison | Associate Circuit Judge, 1997 to 2005; Circuit Judge, 2005 to 2019 | |
| Hon. Gloria Clark Reno | Associate Circuit Judge, 2002 to 2009; Circuit Judge, 2009 to 2020; Presiding Judge, 2018 to 2019 | Municipal Judge, Northwoods Municipal Court, 1994 to 2002 |
| Hon. Sandra Farragut-Hemphill | Associate Circuit Judge, 1991 to 2014; Circuit Judge, 2014 to Present | |
| Hon. Renée Hardin-Tammons | Associate Circuit Judge, 2017 to 2019; Circuit Judge, 2019 to Present | Municipal Judge, City of Berkeley, 1999-2003; Municipal Judge, St. Louis County-North Division, 2002-2015; Provisional Municipal Judge, Moline Acres, Woodson Terrace, and Berkeley 2015-2017 |
| Hon. Brenda Stith Loftin | Associate Circuit Judge, 1995 to 2013 | |

| St. Louis County Circuit Court | | |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Hon. Judy P. Draper | Associate Circuit Judge, 2004 to 2018 | |
| Hon. Heather R. Cunningham | Family Court Commissioner, Juvenile Division; Associate Circuit Judge, 2020 to Present | |
| Jackson County Circuit Court | | |
| Hon. Lewis W. Clymer | Circuit Judge, 1970 to 1980 | Municipal Judge, Kansas City Municipal Court, 1963 to 1970 |
| Hon. Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr. | Circuit Judge, 1980 to 1986 | Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District, 1986 to 1991; U.S. District Judge, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri, 1991 to 2014; Chief U.S. District Judge, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri, 2007 to 2014; Senior U.S. District Judge, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri 2014 to Present |
| Hon. Jon R. Gray | Circuit Judge, 1987 to 2007 | |

| Jackson County Circuit Court | | |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| Hon. Thomas H. Newton | Circuit Judge, 1993 to 1999 | Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District, 1999 to 2021; Chief Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District, 2008 to 2010 |
| Hon. Lisa White Hardwick | Circuit Judge, 2000 to 2001 | Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District, 2001 to Present; Chief Judge, Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District, 2010 to 2012 |
| Hon. Brian C. Wimes | Drug Court Commissioner, 2001 to 2007; Circuit Judge, 2007 to 2012 | U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Missouri and Eastern District of Missouri, 2012 to Present |
| Hon. Kevin D. Harrell | Circuit Judge, 2012 to Present | |
| Hon. Kenneth R. Garrett, III | Associate Circuit Judge, 2010 to 2013 Circuit Judge, 2013 to Present | |
| Hon. Mark A. Styles, Jr. | Deputy Probate Commissioner, 2014 to 2016 Circuit Judge, 2016 to Present | |
| Hon. Jalilah Otto | Associate Circuit Judge, 2014 to 2017 Circuit Judge, 2017 to Present | |

| Jackson County Circuit Court | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Hon. Leonard S. Hughes, Jr. | Magistrate Judge, 1974 to 1977 | Municipal Judge, Kansas City Municipal Court, 1977 to 1986 |
| Hon. Harold Holliday, Sr. | Magistrate Judge, 1977 to 1979 | |
| Hon. Leonard S. Hughes, III | Associate Circuit Judge, 1979 to 1995 | Municipal Judge, Kansas City Municipal Court, 1995 to 2014 |
| Hon. Gregory B. Gillis | Drug Court Commissioner, 1999 to 2001; Associate Circuit Judge, 2001 to 2019 | |
| Hon. Kea S. Bird-Riley | Family Court Commissioner, 2018 to 2020; Associate Circuit Judge, 2020 to Present | |
| Hon. Edward Pendleton | Family Court Commissioner, 1979 to 1984 | |
| Hon. Mildred L. Watson | Family Court Commissioner, 1985 to 1992 | |
| Hon. John F. Payne | Family Court Commissioner, 1992 to 2008 | |
| Hon. Martina Peterson | Family Court Commissioner, 2009 to 2018 | Municipal Judge, Kansas City Municipal Court, 2018 to Present |

| 17th Judicial Circuit (Johnson and Cass Counties) | | |
|---|---|---|
| Hon. Mary Ellen Young | Circuit Judge, 1994 to 2000 | |
| City of St. Louis Municipal Court | | |
| Hon. Walter Moran Farmer | Special Judge, 1900 | |
| Hon. Crittenden Clark | Justice of the Peace, 1922 | |
| Hon. Nathan B. Young, Jr. | Municipal Judge, 1965 to 1972 | |
| Hon. Wayman F. Smith, III | Municipal Judge, 1970 to 1975 | |
| Hon. Rita Montgomery | Municipal Judge, 1977 to 1981 | |
| Hon. William J. McHugh, Sr. | Municipal Judge, 1981 to 1985, 1993 to 2005 | Municipal Judge, Northwoods Municipal Court, 1992 to 1993 |
| Hon. Lisl Williams | Municipal Judge, 1999 to 2009 | |

| City of St. Louis Municipal Court | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| Hon. Marvin O. Teer, Jr. | Municipal Judge | Administrative Law Judge, Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Division of Workers' Compensation, St. Louis Division, 2016 to 2020 |
| St. Louis County Municipal Court | | |
| Hon. Renée Hardin-Tammons | Municipal Judge, 2002-2015 | Municipal Judge, City of Berkeley, 1999-2003; Provisional Municipal Judge, Moline Acres, Woodson Terrace, and Berkeley 2015-2017; Associate Circuit Judge, 2017 to 2019; Circuit Judge, 2019 to Present |
| Hon. Daniel R. Brown | Municipal Judge, 2015 to Present | |
| Kansas City Municipal Court | | |
| Hon. Carl Roman Johnson | Municipal Judge, 1955 to 1960 | |
| Hon. Lewis W. Clymer | Municipal Judge, 1963 to 1970 | Circuit Judge, Jackson County Circuit Court, 1970 to 1980 |
| Hon. Clifford M. Spottsville | Municipal Judge, 1970 to 1977 | |

| Kansas City Municipal Court | | |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| Hon. Leonard S. Hughes, Jr. | Municipal Judge, 1977 to 1986 | Magistrate Judge, Jackson County Circuit Court, 1974 to 1977 |
| Hon. James M. Reed II | Municipal Judge, 1986 to 2007 | |
| Hon. Kit Carson Roque, Jr. | Municipal Judge, 1992 to 1995 | |
| Hon. Leonard S. Hughes, III | Municipal Judge, 1995 to 2014 | Associate Circuit Judge, Jackson County Circuit Court, 1979 to 1995 |
| Hon. Deborah A. Neal | Municipal Judge, 1996 to 2004 | |
| Hon. Ardie A. Bland | Municipal Judge, 2008 to Present; Presiding Judge, 2012 to 2013 | |
| Hon. Corey A. Carter | Municipal Judge, 2015 to Present; Presiding Judge, 2019 to Present | |
| Hon. Martina Peterson | Municipal Judge, 2018 to Present | Family Court Commissioner, Jackson County Circuit Court, 2009 to 2018 |
| Dellwood Municipal Court | | |
| Hon. Donnell Smith | Municipal Judge | Municipal Judge, Greendale Municipal Court |

| Grandview Municipal Court | | |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Hon. Ronald E. Johnson | Municipal Judge, 2015 to Present | |
| Hillsdale Municipal Court | | |
| Hon. Victor Thompson | Municipal Judge | |
| Howardville Municipal Court | | |
| Hon. Andrew Mosby | Police Judge | |
| Normandy Municipal Court | | |
| Hon. Jennifer H. Fisher | Municipal Judge, 2015 to Present | Municipal Judge, Berkeley Municipal Court; Municipal Judge, Moline Acres Municipal Court; Municipal Judge, St. Ann Consolidated Municipal Courts |
| Olivette Municipal Court | | |
| Hon. Krista Peyton | Provisional Municipal Judge, 2018 to Present | |

| Pinelawn Municipal Court | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--|
| Hon. Felica Ezell-Gillespie | Municipal Judge, 2015 to Present | Municipal Judge, Jennings Municipal Court, 2019 to Present; Municipal Judge, Greendale Municipal Court, 2017 to Present; Municipal Judge, Bel-Ridge Municipal Court, 2016 to Present |
| Uplands Park Municipal Court | | |
| Hon. Brandi Herndon-Miller | Provisional Municipal Judge | |
| Velda City Municipal Court | | |
| Hon. Raphael Morris | Municipal Judge | Municipal Judge, Northwoods Municipal Court |
| Hon. Wesley Bell | Municipal Judge | |
| U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission | | |
| Hon. Sandra Moore | Administrative Judge, 1983 to 1994 | |
| Hon. Lisa Thompson Ross | Administrative Judge, 2001 to 2010 | |

| U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission | | |
|--|---|--|
| Hon. Kendra Howard | Regional Chief Administrative Law Judge, 2010 to Present | |
| U.S. Social Security Administration | | |
| Hon. William Horne | Hearing Office Chief Administrative Law Judge | |
| Hon. Evelyn Gunn | Hearing Office Chief Administrative Law Judge | |
| Hon. Jesse H. Butler | Regional Chief Administrative Law Judge, 1990 to 2007 | |
| Hon. Mattie Harvin-Woode | Hearing Office Chief Administrative Law Judge, 2008 to Present | |
| Hon. Joan Deans | Administrative Law Judge, 2010 to Present | |
| Hon. Pearline R. Hardy | Administrative Law Judge, 2010 to Present | |
| Hon. Janice Barnes-Williams | Administrative Law Judge, 2011 to Present | |
| Hon. Harvey McCormick | Regional Chief Administrative Law Judge | |

| U.S. Social Security Administration | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| Hon. Trina Mengesha-Brown | Supervisory Administrative Law Judge, 2017 to Present | |
| Hon. Eve M. Riley | Administrative Law Judge | |
| Missouri Administrative Courts | | |
| Hon. Karen E. Bosley | Administrative Law Judge, Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Division of Workers' Compensation, St. Louis Division, 1999 to Date Unknown | Legal Advisor, Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Division of Workers' Compensation |
| Hon. Leslie H. Brown | Chief Administrative Law Judge, Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Division of Workers' Compensation, St. Charles Division, 1991 to 2008 | Legal Advisor, Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Division of Workers' Compensation, 1988 to 1991 |

| Missouri Administrative Courts | | |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Hon. Kenneth J. Cain | Administrative Law Judge, Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Division of Workers' Compensation, Kansas City Division, 1988 to Present; Chief Administrative Law Judge, Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Division of Workers' Compensation, Kansas City Division, Dates Unknown | Legal Advisor and Associate Administrative Law Judge, Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Division of Workers' Compensation, 1985 to 1987 |
| Hon. Suzette Carlisle | Administrative Law Judge, Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Division of Workers' Compensation, St. Louis Division, 2005 to Present | Legal Advisor, Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Division of Workers' Compensation, 1998 to 2005 |

| Missouri Administrative Courts | | |
|----------------------------------|--|--|
| Hon. Marvin O. Teer, Jr. | Administrative Law Judge, Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Division of Workers' Compensation, St. Louis Division, 2016 to 2020 | Municipal Judge, City of St. Louis Municipal Court |
| Hon. Nimrod T. "Rod" Chapel, Jr. | Administrative Hearing Commissioner, Administrative Hearing Commission, 2007 to 2013 | Municipal Judge, City of Ashland, 2016 |
| Hon. Mary E. Nelson | Administrative Hearing Commissioner, Administrative Hearing Commission, 2010 to 2014 | |
| Hon. Kennard L. Jones | Administrative Law Judge, Public Service Commission, 2006 to 2012 | |