

SPECIAL SESSION OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE
IN AND FOR NEW CASTLE COUNTY

CEREMONY OF INVESTITURE OF
ABIGAIL M. LeGROW
AS A JUDGE OF
THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE

Friday, March 18, 2016
New Castle County Courthouse
Courtroom No. 8B
1:30 P.M.

PRESIDING: THE HONORABLE JAN R. JURDEN
PRESIDENT JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF DELAWARE

PRESENT: HONORABLE JACK A MARKELL, GOVERNOR
of the State of Delaware

HONORABLE LEO E. STRINE, JR.
Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Delaware

HONORABLE JACK B. JACOBS
Justice, Supreme Court of Delaware (Ret.)

HONORABLE T. HENLEY GRAVES
Resident Judge of Sussex County
Superior Court of Delaware

HONORABLE WILLIAM L. WITHAM
Senior Counsel, Sidley Austin LLP
Resident Judge of Kent County
Superior Court of Delaware

AND OTHERS

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GREETINGS BY THE INDUCTEE		
Honorable Abigail M. LeGrow Judge, Superior Court of Delaware		32:14

*Pledge of Allegiance led by Matthew & Hannah LeGrow
Children of Judge LeGrow

*The Bible held by Brian C. LeGrow, Esq.
Husband of Judge LeGrow

*Robing assisted by F.E. and Diane Myers
Parents of Judge LeGrow

1 Friday, March 18, 2016
2 Courtroom No. 8B
3 1:30 P.M.

4 PRESENT:

5 As noted.

6 PRESIDENT JUDGE JURDEN: Good afternoon.

7 Please remain standing for the invocation.

8 Reverend.

9 Reverend Brad Hinton, Rector at St. David's
10 Episcopal Church.

11 -----

12 INVOCATION

13 -----

14 REVEREND HINTON: Over three millennia ago,
15 the Hebrew psalmist said, "Teach me your statutes, oh,
16 Lord, that I may apply my heart to wisdom."

17 Let us pray: Almighty God, whose ways are
18 just and whose judgments are true, guide with your
19 never-failing wisdom the courts of this land. Give to
20 our judges, and especially to your servant Abigail,
21 patience, integrity, and compassion. That remembering
22 the people they serve are yours, they may discern the
23 truth and impartially administer justice, through Jesus
Christ, our Lord. Amen.

1 THE AUDIENCE: Amen.

2 PRESIDENT JUDGE JURDEN: Thank you,
3 Reverend.

4 And now, we are going to be led in the
5 pledge of allegiance by Hannah and Matthew LeGrow.

6 (Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.)

7 -----

8 CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

9 -----

10 PRESIDENT JUDGE JURDEN: Good afternoon,
11 again. I am joined on the Bench today by Resident Judge
12 Graves of Sussex County and Resident Judge Witham of
13 Kent County, and our brethren of the Superior Court and
14 the Supreme Court in the jury box.

15 We are delighted to be in Special Session
16 today for the investiture of Abigail M. LeGrow as a
17 judge of the Superior Court. And the Court would like
18 to recognize her many family members and friends who
19 have joined us today, including her husband Brian;
20 Matthew and Hannah, who you've already met; Judge
21 LeGrow's parents, F. E. and Diane Myers; and her
22 in-laws, Bruce and Muriel LeGrow; and her Aunt Lynn, who
23 I've just met today, who has joined us, as well; and her

1 sister Alexis Wise. Welcome. It's a very proud day.

2 (Applause.)

3 PRESIDENT JUDGE JURDEN: When I got the list
4 of family members, I decided not to meet everybody,
5 especially since there are too many cousins and et
6 cetera (applause and laughter), and time won't allow it.
7 But welcome, everybody.

8 The Court would like to recognize Governor
9 Markell and Justice Jacobs and former Chancellor William
10 Chandler -- I think he's here; is he here? He couldn't
11 be here; okay -- and members of the General Assembly,
12 the elected officials, members of the Delaware Supreme
13 Court, the judiciary and Bar, to all a warm and special
14 welcome on this very great day.

15 And it's now my pleasure to ask our Chief
16 Justice Leo Strine to administer the Oath of Office.

17 Your Honor.

18 -----

19 ADMINISTRATION OF THE OATH OF OFFICE

20 -----

21 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: Thank you, President
22 Judge.

23 PRESIDENT JUDGE JURDEN: Brian LeGrow, her

1 husband (applause).

2 Brian LeGrow will hold the Bible and Judge
3 LeGrow will be assisted with her robing by her parents.

4 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: Are you prepared to
5 take the oath?

6 JUDGE LeGROW: I am.

7 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: Please place your
8 right hand on the Bible, raise your left hand, and
9 repeat after me:

10 I --

11 JUDGE LeGROW: I, Abigail LeGrow --

12 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- do proudly
13 swear --

14 JUDGE LeGROW: -- do proudly swear --

15 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- to carry out the
16 responsibilities --

17 JUDGE LeGROW: -- to carry out the
18 responsibilities --

19 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- of the office
20 of --

21 JUDGE LeGROW: -- of the office of --

22 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- judge of the
23 Superior Court --

1 JUDGE LeGROW: -- judge of the Superior
2 Court --

3 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- to the best of my
4 ability --

5 JUDGE LeGROW: -- to the best of my
6 ability --

7 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- freely
8 acknowledging --

9 JUDGE LeGROW: -- freely acknowledging --

10 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- that the powers --

11 JUDGE LeGROW: -- that the powers --

12 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- of this office --

13 JUDGE LeGROW: -- of this office --

14 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- flow from the
15 people --

16 JUDGE LeGROW: -- flow from the people --

17 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- I am privileged to
18 represent.

19 JUDGE LeGROW: -- I am privileged to
20 represent.

21 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: I further swear --

22 JUDGE LeGROW: I further swear --

23 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- always to place

1 the public interest --

2 JUDGE LeGROW: -- always to place the public
3 interest --

4 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- above any special
5 or personal interests --

6 JUDGE LeGROW: -- above any special or
7 personal interests --

8 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- and to respect the
9 right --

10 JUDGE LeGROW: -- and to respect the
11 right --

12 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- of future
13 generations --

14 JUDGE LeGROW: -- of future generations --

15 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- to share the rich
16 historic --

17 JUDGE LeGROW: -- to share the rich
18 historic --

19 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- and natural
20 heritage of Delaware.

21 JUDGE LeGROW: -- and natural heritage of
22 Delaware.

23 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: In doing so --

1 JUDGE LeGROW: In doing so --

2 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- I will always
3 uphold and defend --

4 JUDGE LeGROW: -- I will always uphold and
5 defend --

6 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- the Constitutions
7 of my country and my state --

8 JUDGE LeGROW: -- the Constitutions of my
9 country and my state --

10 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: -- so help me God.

11 JUDGE LeGROW: -- so help me God.

12 CHIEF JUSTICE STRINE: Congratulations,
13 Judge LeGrow.

14 (Applause.)

15 (Robing of Judge LeGrow assisted by her
16 parents.)

17 PRESIDENT JUDGE JURDEN: Welcome, Judge
18 LeGrow. And may I say how happy I am to finally have
19 another Dickinson School of Law graduate on the Bench.
20 It's been a long time.

21 The Court is pleased to recognize our
22 Governor, Jack K. Markell.

23 Governor.

1 I know this is your first and best --

2 (Applause and laughter.)

3 GOVERNOR MARKELL: I was sort of waiting for
4 the same on-the-count-of-three that you gave Matthew.

5 PRESIDENT JUDGE JURDEN: Don't make me do
6 that.

7 -----

8 REMARKS BY THE HONORABLE JACK A. MARKELL, GOVERNOR

9 -----

10 GOVERNOR MARKELL: Well, absent that, I'm
11 hoping that Matthew might lend me a few of those colored
12 pencils because Justice Jacobs told me that he's got a
13 30-minute set of remarks (laughter).

14 So, I want to start, obviously, with
15 congratulations. It's very well deserved and I know
16 you're going to do a good job.

17 JUDGE LeGROW: Thank you.

18 GOVERNOR MARKELL: I want to thank the
19 members of the Judicial Nominating Commission who have
20 worked so hard over these last several years. There's
21 just been so many appointments and I think they've done
22 a wonderful job. I'm sorry that Chancellor Chandler is
23 not here today because he, I think, really hadn't quite

1 anticipated the workload when I first asked him to
2 assume that role. But he and the JNC have gone a great
3 job. And I also want to thank the members of the
4 Senate. I do see many members of the Senate who are
5 here, or not, but I do appreciate all of them for the
6 great and timely work that they have done, as well.

7 You know, in the complicated circumstances,
8 both criminal and civil, that are placed before this
9 Court where the liberty of a defendants, the safety of a
10 community, or where the fair resolution of a civil legal
11 dispute are at stake, we rely on members of our
12 judiciary to make informed and wise choices that ensure
13 that the law is applied fairly and to ensure that
14 justice, justice for all is served. And we are
15 fortunate here in Delaware to have a deep bench of
16 smart, experienced, and effective judges who do this
17 critically important work, and they're sitting here, and
18 they're sitting over there. And to all of you, I am
19 most grateful.

20 Over the last seven years, I have had the
21 privilege of nominating many members of the Superior
22 Court and the other courts, and I am very proud today to
23 have nominated your newest member, Abby LeGrow.

1 In having had the opportunity to nominate so
2 many judges, I have come to appreciate the attributes of
3 judicial temperament when I consider the applicants --
4 whether the person exhibits compassion, decisiveness,
5 openmindedness, sensitivity, courtesy, patience, freedom
6 from bias, and a commitment to equal justice, because
7 it's these attributes of judicial temperament along with
8 the knowledge of the law and its proper application that
9 lead judges to make wise decisions that are respected by
10 the parties to which they applied, and also, to build
11 confidence in the citizens that we serve. And by your
12 presence here today, it is clear to me that each of you
13 who know and who have worked with Abby agree that by
14 these measures she will make a terrific judge on the
15 Superior Court.

16 She takes on her new responsibilities with
17 very impressive legal credentials. She's obviously got
18 a keen intellect and her commitment to the law has been
19 evident for a long time. She graduated valedictorian of
20 her class and editor of the Law Review at the Dickinson
21 School of Law.

22 Were you also the valedictorian of your
23 class or should I not go there?

1 (Applause and laughter.)

2 PRESIDENT JUDGE JURDEN: Thank you for that,
3 Governor.

4 GOVERNOR MARKELL: I'm going to have to talk
5 to my staffer who wrote that question.

6 PRESIDENT JUDGE JURDEN: That was probably
7 Drew. Judge Graves wants to know if he can spell
8 contempt.

9 GOVERNOR MARKELL: Okay. When do I get to
10 reappoint you or --

11 (Laughter and applause.)

12 GOVERNOR MARKELL: I'm sorry, back to you,
13 Abby.

14 She demonstrated a commitment to public
15 service early on by clerking for Justice Jacobs at the
16 Supreme Court. What a wonderful person to learn from.
17 What an extraordinary judge and what an extraordinary
18 human being.

19 She served as a corporate litigation
20 associate at Potter Anderson & Corroon, and her
21 commitment to public service once again drew her back
22 with an appointment as a Master in Chancery where she
23 has served since 2012 -- and where you developed such

1 big fans. And in a job where intelligence and judgment
2 are important, those who became familiar with her work
3 in Chancery Court observed that you brought a tremendous
4 amount of knowledge and intellect and good judgment to
5 your efforts. You've presided over hearings and written
6 dozens of recommendation opinions on a wide variety of
7 time-sensitive legal disputes. You have proven adept at
8 handling a demanding caseload and you have demonstrated
9 an extraordinary work ethic and intellect and an ability
10 to make timely and well informed decisions, and a
11 professional demeanor that is required for a judge of
12 the Superior Court.

13 So, you know, when I've looked out and I see
14 all these judges that I've appointed, some of whom I
15 have known for a long time before this whole process
16 started and some I really only met when I, you know,
17 when you first applied to be a judicial officer. And I
18 just have to say that, although we did not know each
19 other before, you have really impressed me and you've
20 certainly impressed so many people in the legal
21 community, and I think you're going to do a phenomenal job.
22 I know that all of your colleagues believe that they
23 have gained a really wonderful new colleague and you're

1 going to be, I think, doing such important work in
2 serving justice, in administering justice in this state
3 for a long time to come. Congratulations.

4 (Applause.)

5 JUDGE LeGROW: Thank you.

6 PRESIDENT JUDGE JURDEN: Thank you very
7 much, Governor.

8 We have here today many current and former
9 members of the judiciary. We have Chancellor Bouchard
10 and his colleagues of the Chancery Court. And I say
11 we're happy that you're here and we're happy that we got
12 Abby. So, thank you. Your loss is our gain.

13 I'd now like to recognize, as the Governor
14 said, an extraordinary human being and an extraordinary
15 jurist, Jack B. Jacobs, a Justice of the Supreme Court.

16 (Applause.)

17 -----

18 REMARKS BY SUPREME COURT JUSTICE JACK B. JACOBS

19 -----

20 JUSTICE JACOBS: Thank you, President Judge
21 Jurden.

22 I just have to tell you that it's always
23 daunting to have to get up in a public podium after the

1 Governor speaks, and particularly after the nice things
2 that he said about me. But what's even worse is having
3 publicly to point out that there was a small
4 misstatement in his remarks -- namely, I did not say
5 that I had a 30-minute limit. I told him that I cut 30
6 minutes (applause and laughter).

7 That said, President Judge Jurden, Governor
8 Markell, Chief Justice Strine, members of the General
9 Assembly, members of the Bench and Bar, and Judge
10 LeGrow's family and friends:

11 I am very truly privileged and honored to be
12 invited here to speak to you about Abigail LeGrow, our
13 newest Superior Court judge at this gathering. You've
14 already heard about her accomplishments, and the
15 Governor, as usual, stole some of my thunder, but I'm
16 going to try to go over some of the same ground but
17 under 30,000 feet.

18 Twelve years ago, Abby came to Delaware to
19 be my law clerk, and from that time forward, she's had a
20 meteoric career. She has been a valued personal friend,
21 both to me and my family and, so, in the next few
22 minutes, what I would like to do in this abridged
23 version of my speech is to share with you some insights

1 about Abby as she embarks on this next phase of her
2 career.

3 I'm going to start at the beginning, the
4 year 2004, when I was still a relatively new Supreme
5 Court Justice. And like my judicial colleagues, I had
6 the unenviable task every year of deciding which of
7 about 100 unsolicited applications for a clerkship, all
8 of them from high-quality law students from our nation's
9 finest law schools, would receive an interview. We
10 could not interview them all, we would be there for a
11 week. And, so, only ten made that cut, the very best of
12 the best, I would say, for the one position that I had
13 to offer. And one of those interviewees was Abby
14 LeGrow, then Abigail Myers, and I recall that interview
15 like it happened yesterday. And for me, the choice
16 turned out to be both a laid-down hand and prophetic.
17 As the Governor indicated, Abby was first in her
18 law-school class, she came with splendid
19 recommendations, and when she first walked into my
20 office, she displayed all of the personal qualities that
21 make for a great law clerk. She was relaxed and
22 completely comfortable with herself. She was not
23 intimidated by being in the presence of authority --

1 namely, yours truly. She was modest, indeed almost
2 self-effacing about herself and her achievements, and
3 most important, she had a great sense of humor, which is
4 necessary for anybody who wants to work for me.

5 So, I have to tell you, and I never told her
6 this, but within the first five minutes of that
7 interview, I stopped buying and started selling because,
8 by then, I knew that I would be extending an offer to
9 her, and I also knew that I was going to have
10 competition. Given her outstanding resume, Abby was
11 sure to receive other offers. And as I said, I didn't
12 tell her that, and to my great relief, when I did extend
13 the offer, she accepted. Since then, I have never
14 looked back. And I've always derived immense
15 satisfaction in being one of her mentors, in having
16 brought her to Delaware, and over the following decade,
17 taking pride in her many achievements.

18 Now, what about those achievements? In a
19 real sense, Abby's story is not just about her, but it's
20 also about Delaware. Like many young lawyers who became
21 distinguished members of the Delaware Bench and Bar, she
22 did not hale or have any roots or contacts with this
23 state. But our Delaware legal community has for a long

1 time been a meritocracy and it welcomed her with open
2 arms. In our state, the only thing that matters is
3 whether you have a strong worth ethic and a high level
4 of talent. For those that do, Delaware has generously
5 rewarded them with professional recognition and
6 opportunity. And like many who came before her, Abby is
7 the deserving beneficiary of that legacy.

8 Now, during her clerkship, Abby married
9 Brian, her law-school classmate/sweetheart and,
10 incidentally, it didn't hurt from a clerkship standpoint
11 that Brian, like yours truly, originally hailed from
12 Texas. It was at that wedding that I first met Abby's
13 parents, and her in-laws, and her sister, and I'm
14 grateful today for the opportunity to renew those
15 acquaintances and to witness their obvious pride in
16 their daughter's latest accomplishments.

17 The following year, Abby became a lawyer, as
18 the Governor said, with Potter, Anderson & Corroon, one
19 of Delaware's premiere firms. And for the next seven
20 years she learned her craft, becoming a highly-regarded
21 corporate litigator, expert in the area of corporate,
22 Delaware corporate, and enterprise law. And along the
23 way, she and Brian had two beautiful children, Matthew

1 and Hannah, who you've already seen before I got up
2 here.

3 Now, as with many talented women lawyers,
4 there came a point where Abby had to confront the
5 competing demands of motherhood and of a demanding
6 professional life. She had to decide how best to
7 balance and prioritize those demands. That choice was
8 not easy, because she valued her partnership-track
9 position at Potter Anderson, and, obviously, she valued
10 motherhood. But ultimately, it was her decision to
11 apply for the Court of Chancery mastership that had
12 become available when then Master Sam Clark Glasscock
13 was elevated to the position of vice chancellor. Now,
14 it turns out the appointing authority for this
15 mastership was then Chancellor, now Chief Justice Leo
16 Strine. And in early 2012, Chancellor Strine chose
17 Abby, which naturally caused my respect for the Chief
18 Justice to go up several notches. After all, what
19 better confirmation can there be that great minds think
20 alike. And, so, for the next five years, Master LeGrow
21 discharged the responsibilities of that office admirably
22 and she exemplified the highest traditions of the
23 Delaware Court of Chancery. Her record of achievement

1 in that office was no doubt an important factor that led
2 Governor Markell, clearly another great mind, to appoint
3 Abby to her present position as judge of our state's
4 trial court of general jurisdiction, the Superior Court
5 of Delaware.

6 Now, since I have, at least momentarily, the
7 power of this podium, I want to put to rest, you know,
8 one concern that some might have expressed, and that is,
9 that our newest judge, Abby LeGrow, her professional
10 background has been that of a Chancery Court
11 practitioner and later a Chancery Court jurist, but as a
12 Superior Court judge, she will preside over cases that
13 are on the law side, as distinguished from the equity
14 side of our binary law and equity jurisdictional system.
15 But even so, I suggest without hesitation or reservation
16 that that is not and it never will be a problem because
17 Abby has demonstrated that she has all the qualities and
18 all the virtues that the citizens of Delaware are
19 entitled to expect of their Superior Court judges.

20 Let me conclude by telling you why. The
21 first qualification is intellect and competence, having
22 the legal smarts and the judicial skills required to
23 discharge the important work of that office. The

1 jurisdiction of the Superior Court covers a vast and
2 broad spectrum of cases. They range from matters as
3 uncomplicated as an automobile-accident case to matters
4 as demanding and complex as a capital-murder case and
5 everything in between. As far as legal smarts and
6 judicial skills are the focus, Abby's judicial record as
7 Master in Chancery speaks for itself. Her confidence
8 persuaded the chancellors to assign to her the same
9 kinds of complex and rigorous business litigations that
10 they handled themselves. Maybe at first, although I
11 think toward the end of his mastership career,
12 Vice Chancellor Glasscock did that and the courts in
13 Philly, but at this spot, she filled big shoes but she
14 did it splendidly. In any event, as master, we now know
15 that Abby tried numerous and very complex business
16 cases. She wrote judicial appellant opinions that are
17 of appellant quality. And I personally made it my
18 practice to read all of the LeGrow opinions, which were
19 both on the corporate and noncorporate side. And I have
20 to confess, Your Honor, that she turned out to be a far
21 better writer than I ever was. If there were ever a
22 paradigm case where the student surpasses and
23 outperforms the teacher, Abby is that paradigm.

1 The second quality is judicial temperament,
2 which is sort of a vague term, but to me it means
3 treating with respect everyone who comes before the
4 judge as a litigant, and their lawyers, as well as the
5 indispensably important court personal without whom it
6 would not be possible for the judges to function in the
7 office. A judge with good judicial temperament
8 recognizes that her power is not personal but is
9 derivative from the public office that she as an
10 individual holds only temporarily. Judicial temperament
11 means that the judge understands that every litigant
12 before her believes that his or her case is the most
13 important matter currently in his or her life, and she
14 respects that belief. Judicial temperament means the
15 ability to be patient even though, on occasion, the
16 behavior of the clients and sometimes their lawyers
17 makes patience a commodity in short supply. To say it
18 in one sentence, the holder of the judicial office
19 exercises the power of the State, and must do that with
20 the majesty and with the steadfastness that that office
21 symbolizes and requires. And for the past five years,
22 Abby has been there and done that. Her record and the
23 acclaim it has brought her from the Delaware Bar speak

1 for themselves.

2 Third and lastly is, the judges need to be
3 aware that outside the courtroom he or she is a symbol
4 of the State of Delaware, an ambassador if you will,
5 even though that is not part of the official job
6 description. The success of our judges in that role is
7 one important reason why Delaware's continued to be in
8 the enviable position of being the No.1 judiciary, the
9 No.1 ranked judiciary for the last ten years by the
10 National Chamber of Commerce. There are many ways that
11 a judge can do that and those ways vary with the
12 personality and with the leanings of the judge. Some
13 judges have accomplished that through legal scholarship,
14 others by teaching at law schools or appearing at
15 continuing legal education programs. Yet others have
16 taken their leadership roles in organizations such as
17 the ABA and the American Law Institute. My point is
18 that, putting on the robe does not and ought not require
19 that a judge must stop interacting with the legal
20 profession. Quite the contrary, they must do that and,
21 also, with the public generally. Although once outside
22 the courtroom, a judge may take off her robe, there's no
23 way that she or any of her colleagues can shed the

1 office that they hold or the symbolic importance. The
2 Superior Court judge is one of Delaware's ambassadors to
3 the public and that inescapably comes with the
4 territory. In that regard, Abby will travel down her
5 own professional road, and she will make her own mark,
6 as have those who came before her. By appointing her,
7 the Governor has already concluded, and I wholeheartedly
8 agree, that Abby's service on this Court will be
9 distinguished. As a member of this remarkable Court,
10 Abby will walk with the best of them. In the short time
11 that she has been with us, she has already done herself
12 proud, her family and friends proud, and she will do all
13 of us proud.

14 Congratulations, Your Honor. I'm pleased to
15 join all of those now bidding you welcome.

16 (Applause.)

17 PRESIDENT JUDGE JURDEN: Before introducing
18 our final speaker, I'd like to recognize two former
19 members of the Superior Court that we were just so
20 pleased could be here to join us today: The Honorable
21 Henry duPont Ridgely, former President Judge of the
22 Superior Court for many years, welcome; and the
23 Honorable Joseph R. Slights who was just recently

1 confirmed unanimously by the Senate to serve as the next
2 vice chancellor in and for Kent County.

3 (Applause.)

4 PRESIDENT JUDGE JURDEN: And now, the Court
5 recognizes Jennifer Wasson. Welcome.

6 (Applause.)

7 -----

8 REMARKS BY JENNIFER WASSON, ESQ.

9 -----

10 MS. WASSON: Thank you President Judge
11 Jurden.

12 And at the outset, I fully realize that when
13 you look over at my counsel table, you'll see that one
14 of these things is not like the other. I am vastly
15 outshined by the star power of my resident other
16 speakers here. But I'm going to tell you some things
17 from the heart and I am humbled and honored to have the
18 opportunity to say a few words about my cherished friend
19 Abby LeGrow. I first met Abby about ten years ago when
20 we were associates at Potter Anderson. And Abby and I
21 got to know each other because we both had the honor of
22 serving on a firm committee. Now, associates at Potter
23 Anderson don't get to serve on many firm committees, so

1 this sounds like a big deal; right? Well, it does until
2 we learned that we were being put on the holiday party
3 committee. Thank you, Don Wolfe, for that.

4 (Applause.)

5 MS. WASSON: Several associates each year
6 were given the unenviable task of planning the firm's
7 black-tie annual party. And in the year in question, I
8 was on the committee and Abby was crowned the chair.
9 Thankfully, the firm has since done away with that
10 subtle form of associate torture. Thank you again, Don
11 Wolfe. But, I'm really grateful for having the
12 experience of working on the holiday party committee
13 because that experience really started the beginning of
14 a great friendship with a truly incredible person. Abby
15 was the chair of that committee, not because of her
16 fun-loving personality or her classic sense of style --
17 although she definitely has both -- and clearly, Abby's
18 talent and potential go well beyond her ability to be a
19 party planner. Her work at the firm showed that she
20 could do anything and everything well. And her ability
21 to excel is not a new phenomenon, I'm not telling her
22 parents or her long-term friends anything that they
23 don't already know. In high school, Abby was a

1 prize-winning speaker, an athlete, and a member of the
2 homecoming court. She graduated at the top of her class
3 in college and also at Penn State Law School, and she
4 was editor of the law review, and she completed a very
5 prestigious clerkship with Justice Jacobs on the
6 Supreme Court. At the firm, from small assignments like
7 the holiday party committee to the big company cases,
8 our partners knew that they could rely on Abby to do
9 whatever had to be done, to work hard, and to do it
10 right, most importantly.

11 So, it was no surprise to me or many others
12 when she was asked to become a Master of Chancery. I
13 remember that day when I got the call from you about
14 that. She was so excited, and just as she earned the
15 trust and respect from the members of our firm for her
16 intellect and her judgment, she also quickly earned that
17 same reputation from the Bench and Bar as a master. And
18 you only need to Google her name to see that she has
19 been heralded for her work ethic, for her
20 decision-making quality, her depth of understanding, and
21 her beautifully clear written work product, among other
22 high praise.

23 When I think about qualities that we esteem

1 in our judges, what really makes a good judge, a
2 beautiful verse from the Bible comes to mind. Micah 6:8
3 says, "What does the Lord require of man but to do
4 justice and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy
5 God." And those three characteristics, doing justice,
6 loving mercy, and walking humbly are attributes that
7 Abby evidences every day, and they make her a natural
8 choice for the important job that she is about to
9 undertake.

10 Doing justice is being fair and evenhanded,
11 even if it's hard to make the right decision. We place
12 enormous responsibility on our Superior Court judges to
13 make the right decision about people facing jail time,
14 about people who have been injured, and generally to
15 help people who believe that they have been wronged.
16 Their work is something that this Bar doesn't take for
17 granted and is grateful for every day, because doing
18 justice takes courage and character and wisdom, whether
19 it be for a high profile corporate dispute of national
20 importance, or whether it be a trust dispute between two
21 brothers but it has crucial importance to a family.
22 Abby's presided over both and has shown through her time
23 as a master that she has wisdom beyond her years. Her

1 experience speaks for herself there.

2 Loving mercy is also translated from Hebrew
3 as loving devotion, a commitment to life that's governed
4 by respect, helpfulness, and a concern for others. And
5 Abby's compassionate. She is one of the best listeners
6 that I know and she considers all perspectives on a
7 situation before she makes a conclusion. She gives good
8 advice and that's based in part on the fact that she is
9 a real person. She is balancing the demands of her
10 career with raising two beautiful children, Matthew and
11 Hannah. She knows all about childcare pickups and sick
12 days and swimming lessons and ski trips. And she also
13 is working and does serve as a loving wife to her
14 husband Brian who is so funny and supportive, even if
15 his home-improvement projects drag on a little too long
16 (applause and laughter).

17 I love how you two compliment each other.
18 And I know, Brian, how much Abby appreciates your loving
19 devotion to her.

20 And finally, walking humbly. Abby's sister
21 Alexis told me about how she and her little sister
22 Lindsey used to play theatre after dinner. Alexis would
23 decide what the play would be and the girls would plan

1 out their performance with their parents. And one of
2 their favorites was Peter Pan. And guess who Abby would
3 play. It wasn't Tinker Bell, it wasn't Wendy, and it
4 wasn't Peter. It was Captain Hook or the Lost Boys or
5 the crocodile. And the point of the story is that, she
6 didn't have to always be the star. She was happy to
7 hang out with her sisters whom she adored and she didn't
8 always have to be in the spotlight. And that's telling,
9 but I see it as no surprise for those of us who know her
10 well. People were impressed with Abby, not just because
11 she's incredibly smart and talented but because of the
12 way she conducts herself, the way she lives her life
13 every day, the way she treats people, from her esteemed
14 colleagues on the Bench to our waiters at lunch. She
15 still blushes when I introduce her to people as a judge
16 because she doesn't need a spotlight. Her calm quiet
17 way shows that she leads by example.

18 Abby, I know I can speak for your friends
19 and family and colleagues when I say that we are so
20 proud of you and we are excited for all that you're
21 going to do. Your influence in my life has made me a
22 better person and your influence on this Court is going
23 to make Delaware better for all of us. You have been

1 and you are going to be a great judge. Congratulations.

2 PRESIDENT JUDGE JURDEN: Thank you so much,
3 Jennifer.

4 Abby, you don't know this, but one of the
5 many weighty duties or responsibilities you will have as
6 the junior judge in the Superior Court is now chair of
7 the Court's annual holiday party.

8 (Applause and laughter.)

9 PRESIDENT JUDGE JURDEN: All right. Now,
10 the moment we have all been waiting for, some remarks
11 from our new colleague. Welcome Abby.

12 (Applause.)

13 -----

14 GREETINGS BY JUDGE ABIGAIL LeGROW

15 -----

16 JUDGE LeGROW: Thank you. Thank you,
17 President Judge Jurden; thank you, Governor Markell.

18 Thank you Justice Valihura, Justice Seitz,
19 President Judge Jurden, Chancellor Bouchard, other
20 members of the judiciary, Reverend Hinton, members of
21 the Senate, members of the Judicial Nominating
22 Commission, and my incredible family and friends. Thank
23 you for taking time out of your lives and your busy

1 schedules to be here today.

2 I'm a little bit overcome by the kind words
3 everybody had, and Jennifer was right about one thing, I
4 don't enjoy being in the spotlight, which maybe makes
5 this an unusual career choice for me. But you would
6 think after four and a half years on the Bench, I would
7 be comfortable sitting up here and speaking. And I am,
8 I believe, on most days when it's litigants in front of
9 me, and attorneys. But this is a different and very
10 humbling experience to have so many people who I love
11 and respect in this room here today. So, I have a lot
12 of people that I want to thank and I won't get to each
13 and every one of you individually.

14 But before I go there, I want to say a few
15 words about the oath that I took a few minutes ago. It
16 is my pledge to spend the next 12 years living up, or
17 attempting to, the trust that has been placed in me. I
18 cannot promise that my decisions always will be right,
19 but I can promise that they will be the product of my
20 best efforts, that I will fairly consider all sides of
21 an argument, and that I will do everything in my power
22 to decide cases promptly, thoroughly, and clearly.

23 We are privileged, as Governor Markell said,

1 to live and work in a state where the judiciary and the
2 members of the judiciary are highly respected, both for
3 their knowledge and for their neutrality. It is my
4 sincere promise that I will spend my term striving to
5 uphold the proudest traditions of this office so that
6 the public's faith in the judicial system continues
7 unabated.

8 With that, I have to acknowledge the many
9 people in this room who have allowed me to be sitting
10 here today. I often remark about how lucky I am, but it
11 is more accurate and more consistent with my faith to
12 say that I am blessed. Most of my blessings are sitting
13 in this room, two of them walked out because they got
14 board with me, which is not unusual.

15 (Applause and laughter.)

16 JUDGE LeGROW: Actually -- and this is a
17 funny story -- my son Matthew has been sick this week,
18 and everybody else went out to dinner last night while I
19 stayed home with him, and he indulged me by listening to
20 me practice my remarks today. And at the end, I said,
21 "How was it buddy, did I do a good job?" And he said,
22 "Yeah, but it was a little bit boring." But he liked
23 the part about him.

1 I will try to adequately thank everyone
2 individually but if I don't specifically mention you by
3 name, please know that I am thankful for and I truly
4 know how blessed I am to have you in my life.

5 With all due respect to the Governor and
6 members of the judiciary, and the other important
7 dignitaries in the room, I feel it's only proper to
8 start at the beginning. I am very blessed that both my
9 parents are sitting here today, and that after 44 years
10 of marriage they're still living together in the same
11 house, happily on most days. Although they get along
12 very well, my parents are two very different people, and
13 as a result of that, I've learned very different things
14 from each of them.

15 My dad is one of the gentlest souls that you
16 may have occasion to meet. Despite a childhood that was
17 at times far from easy, he was to my sister and I a
18 quiet and unwavering presence, the dad who went to every
19 possible sporting event, who coached my soccer teams all
20 the way through high school, who spent hours trying to,
21 in vain, tutor me in math, and who was really the
22 calming influence for the three women in his life. All
23 of us tend toward emotional reactions, and he did his

1 very best to keep my mother and my sister and me calm.

2 My father is incredibly smart. He was
3 educated at some of the best institutions in this
4 country, and taught me a great deal about culture and
5 history, and probably even a little bit of math. But
6 the lesson that stands out for me is that he taught me
7 the power of forgiveness. My father was always the one
8 who was first ready to forgive every mistake and every
9 poor choice, and I made a lot of poor choice in my
10 youth. But I could count on one hand the number of
11 times I saw him lose his temper. And he was always the
12 first to be ready to forgive, to move forward, to look
13 for the positive. So, thank you, dad, for your insights
14 and for your forgiveness.

15 My mother, in contrast, was the force in our
16 family, the one who never let me give up, the one who
17 refused to believe I was anything other than the
18 smartest and most capable student in every class. She
19 taught me very early the two important things. The
20 first is that hard work pays off, and the second is the
21 importance of writing with clarity. When I was about
22 ten, my mom went back to school to get her teacher's
23 certification and her Master's. She worked during the

1 day and took classes and studied well into the evening,
2 all while managing her family. Far more than anything
3 she could have said to me, what she demonstrated with
4 her work ethic was a lesson that was impressed upon me
5 then and continues to resonate with me now. She
6 expected nothing less of my sister and I, and, so, when
7 I would bring home a 95 on a test, she would praise me
8 and, then, she would say, "But what happened to the
9 other five percent?" It was frustrating at the time,
10 but her message was not to rest on my laurels, not to be
11 satisfied with "pretty good."

12 She also was militant about our writing and
13 she would sit with me for hours, going over every paper
14 line by line, pushing me to refine every sentence, to
15 choose my words with more clarity to get across the
16 things that I was trying to say. It was torture
17 (applause and laughter), but it was a skill that I was
18 very grateful for in college and in law school, and up
19 until the point where I clerked for Justice Jacobs and I
20 came face to face with his most relentless red pen.
21 Make no mistake, though, my mother never let us doubt
22 her unconditional love. She was always there to help me
23 sort through every problem, big and small. She remains

1 the person that I always seek out for advice because, as
2 much as my teenage self would have hated it, I'm about
3 to admit that she is nearly always right. So, thank you
4 mom for pushing me to challenge myself, and for being
5 there to pick me up when I stumbled.

6 My sister Alexis is here today. We are
7 almost three years apart in age but we were close from
8 early childhood on, and she remains one of my closest
9 confidants. Apart from her three beautiful children,
10 Maggie, Owen, and Jackson who are also here today, she
11 has not been dealt an easy hand by life. Despite that,
12 she remains one of the strongest people that I know.
13 She refuses to get knocked down, and when she does
14 stumble, she gets right back up with a smile on her face
15 and a confidence that she can go on. I know no one else
16 with as much resilience as my sister has and I admire
17 her greatly.

18 So, that brings me to my three biggest
19 blessings, my husband Brian and our two children,
20 Matthew and Hannah. Brian is a lawyer, but most of you
21 in the room probably don't know him. He practices
22 exclusively in Pennsylvania. If you've met him for more
23 than five minutes, you know that he is truly my better

1 half. Brian is a devoted father to our children but he
2 is far more than that to me. He is the glue that hold
3 me together. If you know or have a chance to talk to
4 Brian, you'll realize very quickly that he has a much
5 better sense of humor than I. He has kept me laughing
6 through some of the darkest periods in my life. What
7 you might not know but what I cannot allow to go
8 unacknowledged today is that I truly would not be
9 sitting here today if it were not for him. Four and a
10 half years ago when the position of master in Chancery
11 opened up, I remember calling Brian to tell him about
12 the position and that I was interested in applying for
13 it. And what I remember saying to him was that, if I
14 applied and was lucky enough to be offered the position,
15 it would mean scrapping a number of plans that we were
16 making for our family, including where we would live and
17 where our children would go to school, and the
18 flexibility that he would have in pursuing his own
19 career. And I am not exaggerating when I tell you that
20 he did not hesitate for a moment before saying you have
21 to go for it, this could be a once in a lifetime
22 opportunity. He was right about the nature of the
23 opportunity and he has supported me every day since.

1 So, Brian, thank you for being a partner in the truest
2 sense of the word. I hope our children are one day as
3 blessed in marriage as I have been.

4 Matthew and Hannah aren't here but this is
5 being transcribed (laughter), and, so, I'll say what I
6 was going to say to them. You know, I don't want to
7 leave Matthew's favorite part out (applause and
8 laughter). Matthew and Hannah, I am proud of many
9 things in my life but nothing more so than I am your
10 mother. You are funny, kind, and loving, and I hope you
11 will always remain the best of friends. If your father
12 and I teach you nothing else in life, I hope we teach
13 you to be willing to take chances, be willing to try for
14 something even if you might not get it, because the
15 sting of not trying will last far longer than the sting
16 of not succeeding.

17 I have to also acknowledge my mother-in-law
18 and father-in-law who traveled all the way from Texas to
19 be here. I got about as lucky as anybody can get in
20 Bruce and Muriel who epitomize the term salt of the
21 earth. They raised four unique and incredible sons.
22 They suffered every parent's worst nightmare when they
23 lost their son Matt to muscular dystrophy. And they came

1 out on the other side of that tragedy with a deeper
2 faith and a commitment to family as anybody could hope
3 to have. So, thank you both for making me part of your
4 family and for supporting me.

5 I want to thank my Godparents, my aunts, my
6 cousins, and everybody who took the time to be here
7 today. Thank you for the support that you have given to
8 me and my family.

9 That brings me to the professional side of
10 my thank yous, and I'll start, of course, with the
11 Governor. Governor, thank you so very much for your
12 nomination. I know you had a number of qualified
13 candidates from which to choose and I am honored and
14 humbled to be your choice. Thank you to the members of
15 the Judicial Nominating Commission for your thoughtful
16 interviewing of all the candidates, and to the members
17 of the Senate for considering and confirming my
18 nomination.

19 I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge
20 and thank the many people who changed their plans to be
21 here today, including a number of my current and former
22 colleagues. I know a number of my Superior Court
23 colleagues changed their schedules and even their

1 vacation plans to be here, and I am honored by that.
2 The Chief Justice, the Chancellor, Vice Chancellor
3 Glasscock, Vice Chancellor Montgomery-Reeves, and
4 Justice Jacobs, as well as, I think, a number of other
5 people who changed or cancelled their plans to be at the
6 Tulane corporate conference in order to be here today,
7 and that is incredibly humbling to me. And I'll just
8 apologize in advance that the refreshments outside
9 cannot compete with the food and drink available in New
10 Orleans.

11 (Applause and laughter.)

12 JUDGE LeGROW: As you all have heard by now,
13 I began my professional career as a law clerk to Justice
14 Jacobs, and there was no more informative year in my
15 professional career. There are a few people in this
16 room who have had the privilege of working with Justice
17 Jacobs and who, therefore, know about his legendary red
18 pen and his incredible sense of humor. But far beyond
19 honing my writing skills and playing pranks on me, which
20 he did both, and I will never, Jack, be as good a writer
21 as you are. But in my clerkship year, Justice Jacobs
22 spent the time teaching me how to think critically and
23 how to dig beyond the well-packaged arguments the

1 lawyers were making to truly think about the broader
2 implications of the case. I am blessed that long after
3 my clerkship ended, Justice Jacobs has been a mentor to
4 me. So, thank you, Jack, for your sage advice and for
5 your kind words today.

6 After clerking, I spent several years at
7 Potter, Anderson & Corroon. Many of my colleagues are
8 in the audience today and rather than acknowledge the
9 people individually and running the risk of leaving
10 somebody out, I will say that each of my colleagues,
11 associates, and partners, as well as the very talented
12 staff, played a role in making this day possible. I had
13 the privilege of working with some of the very best
14 lawyers in this state, who taught me a great deal about
15 professionalism and ethics, as well as substantive law,
16 and who gave me the opportunities to grow as a lawyer.
17 I owe a debt of thanks to my friend Jennifer Wasson for
18 her friendship, honesty, and advice. Jennifer and I, as
19 she said, have been friends for a decade and I don't
20 know a lawyer who is as genuine or who has as much
21 integrity. Thank you for speaking today, Jennifer.

22 I also have to acknowledge Margie Pietras,
23 who was my assistant at Potter for the last two and a

1 half years I was there. Margie -- and this is
2 amazing -- has been with the firm for over 60 years, but
3 far more than the length of her service, far more
4 remarkable is the fact that she is beloved by every
5 single person there and she is incredibly adept at her
6 job. I miss working with her, but I am very blessed
7 that she continues to be a dear friend.

8 When I moved from private practice to the
9 Court of Chancery a number of years ago, I gained a new
10 set of colleagues and friends. I want to thank the
11 Chief Justice, who had to step away. But he took a
12 chance on a relative unknown when he gave me this spot,
13 and he has continued to be a mentor and friend to me.
14 None of this would be happening today had he not offered
15 me that position and I am eternally grateful for it. I
16 am, likewise, very thankful to the Chancellor for
17 allowing me to stay when he took office.

18 FROM THE FLOOR: Easy call.

19 JUDGE LeGROW: And for always treating me as
20 an equal and for supporting my career and my application
21 for this position despite the fact that it was already a
22 period of unprecedented turnover in the Court. It was
23 an honor to serve as a master on your Court and to

1 benefit from your decisive but inclusive leadership.

2 Thank you also to each of the Vice
3 Chancellors, to Master Ayvazian, and to the talented
4 members of the Court of Chancery staff, all of whom made
5 the last four years an absolute pleasure. Both the
6 judges on that Court and the staff who support them
7 display an unparalleled work ethic and a commitment to
8 public service. I owe a particular debt of thanks to my
9 tireless, pleasant -- I don't know where she is -- and
10 exceedingly practical assistant Ramona Monsen, to Renee
11 Kinsey who I know is here -- oh, there she is -- who is
12 one of the smartest and most dedicated people I've had
13 the privilege of working with; and to Karlis Johnson,
14 whose advice and assistance has been so valuable to me.
15 Thank you to everyone with whom I've worked for your
16 patience and for your friendship.

17 That brings me finally to my new colleagues
18 and to the Superior Court staff. I was privately sworn
19 in a few weeks ago and I have learned a number of things
20 since then, but the chief among them is that Chancery
21 does not happen to be exclusive on talented staff. I
22 have already been the beneficiary of the wealth of
23 knowledge and the quick thinking of the staff, and I

1 look forward to getting to know and working with each of
2 you. Thank you in particular to my new judicial
3 assistant Mary Santo, to my law clerk, Christina Belitz,
4 for your patience and your gentle suggestions, as well
5 as with your assistance in making today possible. Thank
6 you also to Linda Carmichael, Mark Zaffarano, Roger
7 Crane, Ellen Slewinski (PH.), and Karlis Johnson for
8 working so hard to organize this ceremony today.

9 Finally, I am blessed to be trading one
10 supportive group of colleagues for another, and I want
11 to personally thank each of the judges on the Superior
12 Court, who have welcomed me with open arms, offered me
13 advice to ease my concerns about making this transition,
14 and willingly put aside their significant workloads to
15 answer my questions and to accompany me to hearings. I
16 also appreciate the gentle reminders about which button
17 I am supposed to be pushing on the elevator (applause
18 and laughter). It's more confusing when you think of
19 it.

20 I am so truly honored to count myself as one
21 of you and I thank you all, again, for coming, and I
22 hope you'll stay for refreshments.

23 (Applause.)

1 PRESIDENT JUDGE JURDEN: Ladies and
2 gentlemen, that now concludes this special session.
3 Please stay and greet our new judge, and there will be
4 refreshments if Matthew and Hannah haven't been out
5 there all this time. We're in recess.

6 (Special session concluded at 2:28 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF COURT STENOGRAPHER

I, Patrick J. O'Hare, RPR, CSR, Assistant Chief Court Stenographer of the Superior Court, State of Delaware, do hereby certify that the foregoing is an accurate transcript of the proceedings had, as reported by me, in the Superior Court of the State of Delaware, in and for New Castle County, in the case herein stated, as the same remains of record in the Office of the Prothonotary at Wilmington, Delaware. This certification shall be considered null and void if this transcript is disassembled in any manner by any party without authorization of the signatory below.

WITNESS my hand this 30th day of March 2015.

/s/ Patrick J. O'Hare, RPR, CSR

Official Court Stenographer
Delaware CSR No. 158-PS