

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Supreme Court Justice Valihura and Family Court Chief Judge Newell
promote *pro bono* representation at American Bar Association Event**

Justice Karen L. Valihura of the Delaware Supreme Court and Chief Judge Michael K. Newell of the Delaware Family Court promoted the virtues of representing indigent litigants to a meeting of the American Bar Association (ABA) held on Feb. 27, 2019 in Wilmington at the law offices of Young Conaway, Stargatt & Taylor.

Justice Valihura and Chief Judge Newell were both featured panelists in a discussion entitled, “Fearless Lawyering: How to Grow *Pro Bono* to Ensure Access to Justice.” The event was part of the ABA’s Children’s Rights Litigation Committee’s 2019 Listening and Appreciation Tour, and the panel discussion followed opening remarks by ABA President Bob Carlson and Chair of the ABA Section of Litigation Gene Vance.

Justice Valihura discussed how *pro bono* representation helps the community at large and detailed the ongoing efforts – and the recent progress – by Delaware’s Access to Justice Commission, particularly in the areas focusing on increasing *pro bono* representation and increasing funding for community legal aid groups. “There are a lot of children that need help who aren’t getting it,” she told the crowd of attorneys.

Chief Judge Newell, referring to his private practice days when he volunteered to represent indigent litigants, told attorneys that he found those who received free legal assistance were grateful for the help and incredibly appreciative, providing a greater sense of fulfillment and job satisfaction as an attorney. “It also puts a good face on the legal system,” he said.

Other participants in the panel discussion included Kelly Ensslin, Managing Attorney of the Delaware Office of Child Advocate and Mark L. Desgrosseilliers, Esq. who regularly takes *pro bono* cases. The discussion was moderated by Agneta C. Vigil, Esq., a member of the ABA’s Children’s Rights Litigation Committee Working Group.

Justice Valihura was sworn in as a Justice of the Supreme Court in July 2014. Before joining the bench Justice Valihura was a partner at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP where she focused on corporate litigation including complex commercial and corporate governance issues, federal and state securities matters, as well as mergers and acquisitions and other transactional litigation.

Chief Judge Newell joined Family Court in 2004 and was elevated to Chief Judge in 2015. Before joining the bench, Chief Judge Newell was a partner at Connolly, Bove, Lodge & Hutz LLP where he specialized in family law. He is a past Chair of the Family Law Section of the Delaware State Bar Association and served as a member of the Delaware Supreme Court’s Board on Professional Responsibility and on the Board of Delaware Volunteer Legal Services.

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