

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Supreme Court Justice Karen L. Valihura honored by the
Women & the Law Section of the Delaware Bar**

Delaware Supreme Court Justice Karen L. Valihura was honored by the Women & the Law Section of the Delaware State Bar Association on Tuesday for becoming the first woman to hold the title of Acting Chief Justice of the Delaware Supreme Court.

Justice Valihura assumed the role of interim head of the Judicial Branch on Nov. 1, 2019 due to her status as the most senior member of the Delaware Supreme Court following the retirement of Chief Justice Leo E. Strine, Jr. on Oct. 31, 2019.

To mark this occasion, the Women & the Law Section along with Justice Valihura gathered on the steps of the Leonard L. Williams Justice Center in Wilmington Tuesday evening for a short ceremony followed by a reception afterward.

“In the history of the Delaware Supreme Court, no woman has ever presided as Chief Justice,” said Women & Law Section co-chairs Kelley Huff and Kate Harmon in a statement. “Presently, and for a brief time, Justice Karen L. Valihura presides as the first woman Acting Chief Justice of the Delaware Supreme Court. Acting Chief Justice Valihura is a valuable member of our Section and we are pleased and honored to commemorate this moment in our Supreme Court’s history with her.”

In her remarks, Justice Valihura told the crowd, “As the senior ranking Justice on the Court, I am proud to serve as Acting Chief Justice, a position bestowed upon me, not through the normal appointment process, but only by virtue of my senior-most rank on the Court and by operation of law. Why, one might ask is this moment worthy of celebration when it can be viewed as neither victory nor defeat – but rather just a circumstance forged by a temporary vacancy? For me, the answer lies not in focusing on me or on the temporary elevation of my position, but rather on the decades-long journey all women in the Delaware Bar have travelled in order to be here tonight.”

Justice Valihura’s tenure as Acting Chief Justice will include presiding over the Courts’ oral arguments today in Dover. Gov. John Carney has named Justice Collins J. Seitz, Jr. to be Delaware’s ninth Chief Justice and the Delaware Senate has scheduled a confirmation hearing for Nov. 7, 2019. On that same date, the Delaware Senate is also set to consider the nomination of Vice Chancellor Tamika Montgomery-Reeves to the Supreme Court pending Justice Seitz’s confirmation as Chief Justice.

Justice Valihura is the second woman to serve on the Delaware Supreme Court. Retired Justice Carolyn Berger, who served from 1994 to 2014, was the first.

Prior to her appointment, Justice Valihura was a partner at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, LLP. Her practice in corporate and complex commercial issues included federal and state securities claims, mergers and acquisitions, and fiduciary duties of directors. While in private

practice, Justice Valihura was consistently selected for inclusion in Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business and The Best Lawyers in America. She is also a member of the American Law Institute, including its Board of Advisors for its Restatement for Corporate Governance.

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