

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Official portraits of two former Superior Court Judges unveiled at Leonard L. Williams Justice Center**

*President Judge Jan R. Jurden and the late Judge John A. Parkins, Jr. honored*

Delaware Superior Court, along with the Delaware Superior Court Historical Society and the Delaware State Bar Association, on Thursday unveiled official portraits for retired President Judge Jan. R. Jurden and the late John A. Parkins Jr.

The ceremony, which was attended by President Judge Jurden, who now serves as dean of the Wilmington University School of Law, and family members of Judge Parkins, took place in courtroom 7E at the Leonard L. Williams Justice Center in Wilmington. In the coming days, Parkins' portrait will be hung in courtroom 6D, while Jurden's portrait, per court guidelines, will hang in a reception area in the courthouse until her official retirement from the Delaware Bar.

"Hanging portraits of our past judges in our courthouses is a revered tradition in the Delaware Courts that I'm proud the court is continuing, particularly for these two jurists, who each left a distinctive mark on our judiciary," said Superior Court President Judge Eric M. Davis.

Jurden joined the Superior Court in May 2001 and became the first woman to be named President Judge of Superior Court in January 2015. During her tenure she served on the Complex Commercial Litigation Division, launched and presided over the Superior Court Mental Health Court, oversaw the Conflict Attorney Program, and presided over the Veterans' Treatment Court. Jurden also led the court through the COVID 19 pandemic, sat on the Supreme Court by designation on several occasions and oversaw dozens of civil and criminal high-profile trials. In 2019 Jurden was inducted into the Delaware Women's Hall of Fame and in 2022 was given the Honorable Aida Wasserstein Award for professional excellence and for significant contributions to the Women and the Law Section of the Delaware State Bar Association. In 2011 she received the DSBA's "Outstanding Service to the Courts and Bar Award."

Prior to joining the bench, Jurden worked in private practice with Young, Conaway, Stargatt & Taylor, LLP from 1988 to 2001. A U.S. Army veteran, she earned her law degree from Dickinson School of Law and her undergraduate degree from Muhlenberg College. She stepped down from Superior Court on February 28, 2025, and was named dean of Wilmington University's School of Law on April 1, 2025.

Parkins was appointed to the Superior Court in August 2008, and retired from the bench early on April 1, 2019, due to ongoing health challenges. He passed away on May 24, 2019. Parkins was also a U.S. Army veteran, and he earned his law degree, with honors, from Washington & Lee

University and his undergraduate degree from the University of Delaware. He went on to clerk for the Delaware Supreme Court. Parkins then served for 8 years as a Deputy Attorney General, including time as the Chief Deputy of the Appeals Division. From 1985 to 2008, immediately prior to his nomination to the bench, Judge Parkins was in private practice with Richards, Layton, & Finger. Parkins was fondly recalled by his colleagues and friends for his keen understanding of the law and his wit. At his public investiture in 2008, Judge Parkins quoted legendary New York Yankee Lou Gehrig to express his appreciation and enthusiasm for being named to the bench, saying, “Today I consider myself to be the luckiest man on the face of the Earth.” He concluded his remarks then, as he concluded many conversations and occasional court proceeding, with his tongue-in-cheek directive, “now take the rest of the day off.”

The portrait of Jurden was painted by the Chicago-based artist Sergei Chernikov, and Parkins’ portrait was done by Dick Dubroff, who uses a process that takes a photograph (in this case a photo taken by Eric Crossan) to give it the appearance of a painted portrait.

