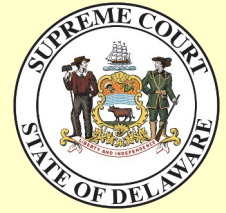


SUPREME COURT



CHIEF JUSTICE COLLINS J. SEITZ, JR.



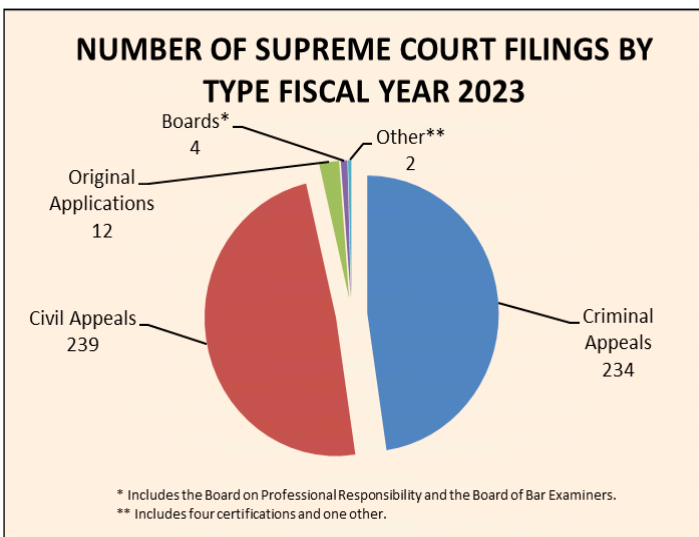
SUPREME COURT

Fiscal Year 2023 was a time of change for the Delaware Supreme Court. Two Justices departed and two arrived to get the Court back to full strength. It was also a time to move past the COVID-19 pandemic and refocus our attention on Judicial Branch reforms.

The Delaware Supreme Court received 491 appeals and resolved 453 cases by opinion, order, or dismissal. The Court decided appeals an average of 33 days from the date of submission to the date of final decision. In 99% of the appeals decided in FY 23, the Court met the Delaware Judiciary

standard for deciding cases within 90 days of submission. The Court resolved 85% of all cases within 290 days of filing of a notice of appeal and resolved 95% of all cases within a one-year timeframe. The Court held 72 oral arguments, and 120 cases were submitted for decision on the briefs.

Following a comprehensive review and recommendation from the Board of Bar Examiners, the Supreme Court approved significant changes to the Delaware Bar Exam. They include changing the passing score from a scale of 145 to 143, reducing the number of essays from eight to four, and limiting the number of essay topics from 14 areas of law to 10. In perhaps the biggest change, the exam will be offered twice a year starting in February 2024. These changes were not made to make the Bar Exam “easier” or lower our already high standards for bar admission, but to increase access to the exam, improve the admissions process, and make Delaware more competitive in the nationwide market



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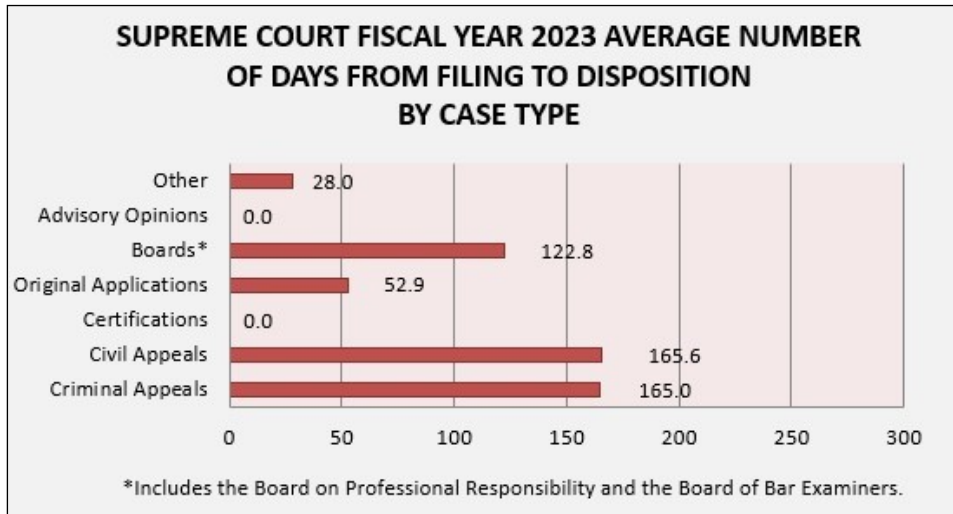
SUPREME COURT

for legal talent. In December, 137 new attorneys were admitted to the Delaware bar during a ceremony held at the Schwartz Center in Dover.

The Supreme Court and Administrative Office of the Courts partnered with the Leading Youth Through Empowerment (“LYTE”) Scholars Program, and the Delaware Department of State Future Leaders Internship Initiative (“FLii”) to offer paid summer internships to rising high school juniors and seniors throughout the state. LYTE provides a wide range of academic programming to under-represented students. Twenty students were assigned to the courts for the six-week summer program, which offered educational and work experience in the judicial system. The students attended oral arguments before the Supreme

Court in Dover and attended proceedings in other courts. Additionally, they visited with judicial officers and legal practitioners and received valuable guidance on careers in the legal field.

Justice James T. Vaughn, Jr. retired after 25 years of distinguished service to the citizens of Delaware. Justice Vaughn’s judicial career began in 1998 when he was appointed to Superior Court as Resident Judge for Kent County. He became President Judge of Superior Court in 2004 and was appointed to the Supreme Court in



2014.

Justice Tamika Montgomery-Reeves stepped down to accept her nomination to the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals. Justice Montgomery-Reeves



(Left to right) Chief Justice Collins J. Seitz, Jr. and Justices Abigail M. LeGrow and N. Christopher Griffiths after the confirmation vote for both justices in the Delaware Senate.



Attorney Richard K. Herrmann (left) receiving the Andrew D. Christie Pro Bono Publico Award from Justice Karen L. Valihura at the DSBA Law Day Luncheon on May 2, 2023.

Photo courtesy Delaware State Bar Assn.

SUPREME COURT

served as Vice Chancellor in the Court of Chancery from 2015 until her appointment to the Supreme Court in 2019. She was the first African American to serve on either court. We are grateful to the former Justices for their service.

Following these departures, the Court welcomed two new members – Justice Abigail LeGrow and Justice N. Christopher Griffiths. Justice LeGrow was a Magistrate in Chancery starting in 2011. In 2016 she was appointed to the Superior Court. Before his appointment, Justice Griffiths was a partner at Connolly Gallagher and served on several Supreme Court committees. Justice Griffiths is the second African American and first African American man to serve on the Delaware Supreme Court.

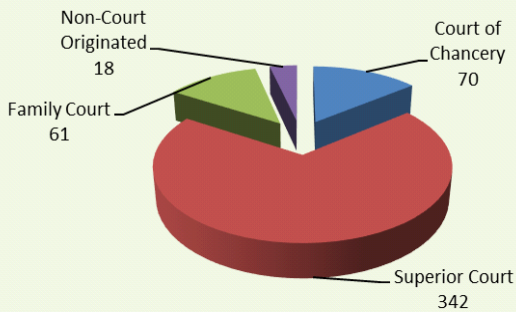
This year the Court was honored to present the Andrew D. Christie Pro Bono Publico award to Richard

K. Herrmann in appreciation for his outstanding service to the Court over the course of his career. Mr. Herrmann served on several Supreme Court committees over the years, including the Commission on Law and Technology. Before his retirement he was instrumental in helping the Judicial Branch navigate virtual meetings and court proceedings in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Herrmann also created, and for many years performed in, the Delaware Judiciary’s annual holiday reenactment of “Miracle on 34th Street” at our county courthouses for elementary school students, a tradition that is now in its 20th year.

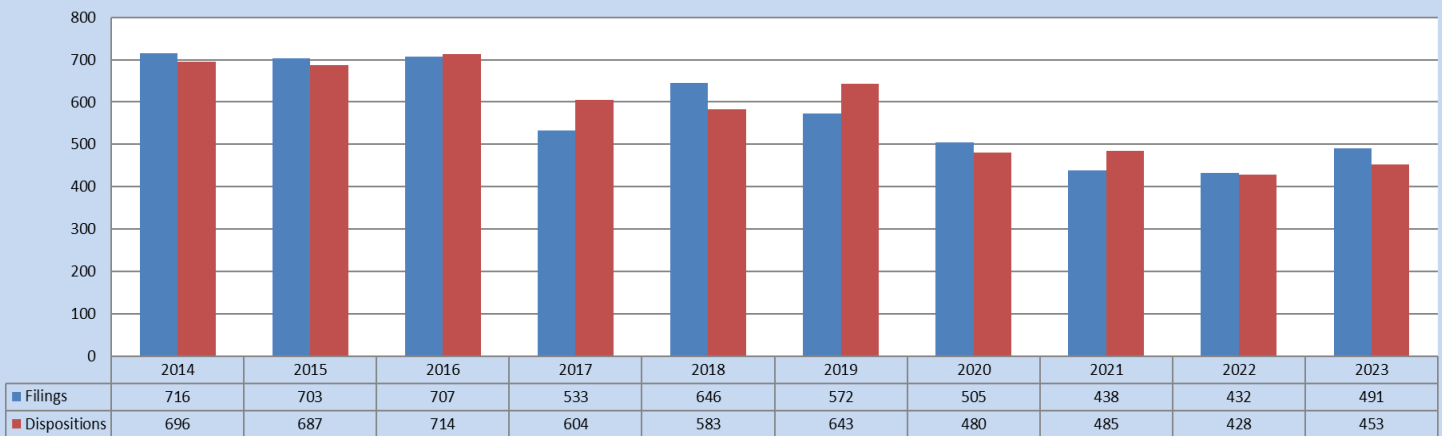
Finally, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for the renovation and expansion of the Custom House, located in front of the Leonard L. Williams Justice Center in Wilmington. This project will revitalize a long-vacant historic property in downtown Wilmington and become the permanent home of the Supreme Court in New Castle County and Administrative Office of the Courts in New Castle County. The Court will continue to hear oral arguments in the historic Dover Courthouse.

With our building projects underway and continued support from the General Assembly, the Supreme Court is well-positioned to meet the challenges of an expanding docket and to address the needs of Delawareans now and into the future. ♦

NUMBER OF SUPREME COURT FILINGS BY COURT OF ORIGATION FISCAL YEAR 2023



SUPREME COURT FILINGS & DISPOSITIONS BY FISCAL YEAR



Continued on next page

SUPREME COURT



Supreme Court Justices

Standing left to right:

Justice Abigail M. LeGrow
Justice Karen L. Valihura
Chief Justice Collins J. Seitz, Jr.
Justice Gary F. Traynor
Justice N. Christopher Griffiths