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D.C. Superior Court Judge Kimberley Knowles Sworn In



National Law Journal photo by Zoe Tillman. Above, D.C. Court of Appeals Chief Judge Eric Washington administers the oath of office to new D.C. Superior Court Judge Kimberley Knowles.

District of Columbia Superior Court Judge Kimberley Knowles, the newest member of the city's trial court, was sworn in on Friday. A former prosecutor in the local U.S. attorney's office, Knowles was praised by former colleagues for her meticulous preparation as a lawyer and commitment to public service.

Knowles was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on August 2 and has served as a judge since then, but Friday's ceremony marked her formal ascension to the bench. Before she was nominated by the White House in June, Knowles had been as a magistrate judge in Superior Court since 2010.

Superior Court Chief Judge Lee Satterfield said during the ceremony that Knowles would be serving in Family Court. "A lot of good things will happen to the young people in her courtroom," he said.

Knowles joined the U.S. attorney's office in 1997 after clerking for District of Columbia Court of Appeals Chief Judge Eric Washington, who was at the time a relatively new associate judge in Superior Court. Washington said in his remarks that Knowles was always "infinitely prepared for every situation" and committed to helping him be the best judge he could be.

In the U.S. attorney's office, Knowles worked in a variety of sections before she was named deputy chief of the sex offense and domestic violence section in 2004. She served in that role until her appointment as a magistrate judge in 2010.

Holland & Knight partner William Gould, who served with Knowles in the U.S. attorney's office, said in his remarks on Friday that Knowles was known for her "almost pathological preparedness," noting that defense lawyers who went up against her knew they couldn't count on her to make any "operator error."

Given that preparedness, Gould said, individuals who come before her can trust that when she makes a decision that affects their life in a significant way, "there will be no judge in any courtroom that will be more prepared and confident and comfortable making that decision."

As is typically the case at swearing-in ceremonies for the city's local trial and appellate courts, Knowles did not speak. At her July confirmation hearing, *Legal Times* reported that while Knowles said she had extensive experience handling criminal cases, she acknowledged that there would be a learning curve when it came to managing civil case calendars.

"I will read the law, I will study, I will read the case law and get a fundamental knowledge," Knowles told the committee at the time.

Knowles filled the seat vacated by now-Senior Judge Zinora Mitchell-Rankin.

Posted by Zoe Tillman