

**HONORABLE JUDGE DIANE M. BRENNEMAN  
MAGISTRATE JUDGE  
SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Diane M. Brenneman was appointed a Magistrate Judge by Chief Judge Rufus G. King III on February 20, 2004.

Judge Brenneman was born in Rockville Center, Long Island, New York and raised in Southern California where her father, Frank E. Quass, a graduate of Rennselear Polytechnic Institute, was an aeronautical engineer and computer entrepreneur. Her mother, Margaret C. Quass, was a graduate of Hofstra University and a full-time mother.

Judge Brenneman graduated from Santa Clara University in 1968 and entered the Peace Corps, serving two years as a teacher in India. On her return to the United States, she taught in schools in California before moving in 1973 to the Washington area, where she served as the Assistant Admissions Director of Dag Hammarskjold College in Columbia, Maryland and then as founding Director of the Polycultural Institute, a program—likened to a reverse Peace Corps—that involved students of different economic, cultural and national backgrounds working with community development organizations in Washington’s inner city. Her experience in this program prompted her to enter law school.

Judge Brenneman graduated from Georgetown University Law Center in 1979 and became a clinical supervisor in the Family Law Clinic of the Antioch School of Law. She received a master’s degree in clinical teaching from the Antioch School of Law in 1982 and at that time became a full professor of the school. In 1985, she became the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Her teaching experience continued at Antioch’s successor institution, the District of Columbia School of Law. While at the D.C. School of Law, Judge Brenneman worked extensively with lead counsel, Joseph Tulman, and attorneys from the Department of Justice on the Forest Haven class action case.

In 1986, she and Mark G. Levine, a former ASL colleague, established the general civil practice law firm of Brenneman and Levine. After her partner and his family moved to Chicago in 1995, Judge Brenneman continued as a sole practitioner focusing primarily on family law, domestic relations law, and alternative dispute resolution.

During the twenty-three year period in which she taught law, supervised legal clinics, and served as a private practitioner, Judge Brenneman had a role in the training of more than 500 law students and has been directly involved in the provision of legal services to more than 2,500 low-income families of the District of Columbia.

For many years, Judge Brenneman has been closely involved in the work of the D.C. Bar *Pro Bono* Program, the Women's Bar Association, Legal Counsel for the Elderly, the Archdiocesan Legal Network, and the Superior Court.

- As co-chair of the Family Law Representation Committee of the D.C. Bar's *Pro Bono* Program for over six years, she assisted the Court with updating pleadings, forms, and practice requirements to conform to the revisions in the law and provide access for persons in the Domestic Relations Branch of the Court.
- She is a member of the Superior Court's Family Rules Advisory Committee.
- As a trainer and mediator, she participated in a number of Family Court pilot activities, including the Child Protection Mediation Project and the Family Mediation Section of the Court's Multi-Door Mediation Division.
- More than ten years ago, Judge Brenneman was instrumental in the development of the *Pro Se* Divorce Clinic that continues to provide informational services to families and which serves as a prototype for new *pro se* oriented programs.
- Judge Brenneman was actively involved with the Legal Counsel for the Elderly as a reduced fee volunteer attorney.
- On behalf of the Women's Bar Association, she served with Elizabeth Langer as the co-producer and co-director for a twelve-part public-access cable television series aimed at providing basic information on family law to the general public. She was instrumental in coordinating the assistance of members of the Women's Bar Association and the Women's Bar Association Foundation in the Family Court's pilot Self-Help Center.
- In 2001, Judge Brenneman was the recipient of the Archdiocesan Legal Network of Catholic Charities award for "Outstanding Legal Services in Family Law."

In 2003, she co-authored with Linda Ravdin a comprehensive practice manual for attorneys on Domestic Relations Law in the District of Columbia that is published by Lexis Nexis/Matthew Bender. She and attorney Ravdin update this manual annually.

In addition to her membership in the D.C. Bar and the Women's Bar Association, Judge Brenneman is a member of the Bar Association of the District of Columbia, the American Bar Association, the National Bar Association, the District of Columbia Trial Lawyers' Association, the Washington Bar Association, the Maryland State Bar Association, the Montgomery County Bar Association, and the United States Supreme Court Bar. She completed her second term as President of the Women's Bar Association Foundation in 2006. She serves as a member on the foundation boards of the Women's Bar Association and the Bar Association of the District of Columbia.

She is married to Dr. Lyle Brenneman. Her daughter, Sara Chauhan, resides and teaches school in Washington, D.C. Her stepdaughters are Kathryn Lyon and Elizabeth Clusman. She has six step grandchildren.