



PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

The 26th Judicial District of North Carolina
www.nccourts.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 22, 2022

Mecklenburg County's Longest-Serving District Court Judge Rickye McKoy-Mitchell Retires

Charlotte, NC – On Thursday, September 1, 2022, Judge Rickye McKoy-Mitchell will retire from the bench in Mecklenburg County after 24 years of exemplary judicial service. Judge McKoy-Mitchell's Ceremonial Closing of Court will be held on September 1, 2022 and live-streamed for viewing by registering at <https://www.b2streamed.com/so/d80Aotg4-?languageTag=en>.

Judge McKoy-Mitchell is a double Tarheel having received both her Bachelor of Arts Degree and Juris Doctor from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Law. She was a James M. Johnston Scholar and a member of the Order of the Valkyries. She is a recipient of the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, among the most prestigious awards presented by the Governor of North Carolina to individuals who have a proven record of extraordinary service to the state. At the time that Judge McKoy-Mitchell was awarded the Order of the Long Leaf Pine in 1980 as an undergraduate, she was and still is one of the youngest persons ever to have received the award.

Mecklenburg County's longest-serving District Court Judge, she has been a District Court Judge in the 26th Judicial District for almost 24 years. Judge McKoy-Mitchell has presided in every District Court and currently is the Child Support Lead Judge; School Justice Partnership Co-Chair; Mayor's Youth Employment Advisory Board Member; Race Matters for Juvenile Justice Leadership Team Member and Chair of its Youth Initiative; and National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges' Domestic Violence Institutes Faculty. Prior to becoming a Judge, Judge McKoy-Mitchell practiced in both the criminal and civil areas of law at both the state and federal court levels. She was a Reginald Heber Smith Fellow/Attorney with Legal Services of the Southern Piedmont, Attorney Advisor with the Office of Hearings and Appeals of the Social Security Administration, Senior Trial Attorney with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and Assistant District Attorney with the 26th Prosecutorial District.



Judge McKoy-Mitchell is an active member of the Mecklenburg County Bar (MCB) and was Co-Chair of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee and Co-Chair of the Pipeline Committee and still serves on the Pipeline Committee; served on MCB's Board of Directors; past Alumni Association Board of Directors for the UNC-CH

School of Law and its Alumni Outreach Committee; and past Board of Visitors for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is the Judicial Liaison for the Leary Bar Association; member of the Charlotte Women's Bar of the North Carolina Association of Women Attorneys (NCAWA) and former member of the Board of Governors of NCAWA; member of the North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers; and member of the National Association of Women Judges.

Additionally, Judge McKoy-Mitchell is a member of the Women Executives; The Links, Incorporated (Alumna Links Committee Chair and Chaplain); Jack and Jill of America, Incorporated Associate member; Junior League of Charlotte Sustainer member (Advisory Committee); Black Political Caucus of Charlotte-Mecklenburg County (BPC); and former Deacon and Youth and Young Adult Church Leader and current Board of Directors Member for her Church, Mount Carmel Baptist Church. Judge McKoy-Mitchell is a Golden Life Member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated (Charlotte Alumnae Chapter) and was recognized as Delta of the Year. She established the Charlotte Alumnae Chapter's Excellence in Youth program, which was renamed in her honor.

Judge McKoy-Mitchell has long been involved in and recognized for not only her outstanding Judicial Leadership, but also her exceptional community service. As such, she was honored with the Junior League of Charlotte's Outstanding Leadership Award; Democratic Women of Mecklenburg County's Doris Cromartie Lifetime Achievement Award; Mecklenburg Times' 50 Most Influential Women; Lawyers Weekly Leaders in the Law and Women of Justice Recipient for her outstanding leadership and professionalism (only recipient of all three awards consecutively); the Julius L. Chambers Diversity Champion Award from the Mecklenburg County Bar which recognizes an individual who embodies high ethical standards, unquestioned integrity, consistent competence and who champions diversity in the legal profession; Delta of the Year with May Week Excellence in Youth being named in her honor; Citizen Lawyer of the Year by the North Carolina Bar Association; Outstanding Jurist award by the North Carolina Advocates of Justice; Pinnacle Award of the BPC; Outstanding Alumni of the Year by the Alumni Association of UNC-Chapel School of Law Alumni Board; UNC-CH Harvey E. Beech Outstanding Black Alumnus; and the Martin Luther King Grassroots Change Agent award, among many others.

Although being the recipient of several awards, Judge McKoy-Mitchell believes that being a judge is much more than addressing each individual case and that she is a public servant. Judge McKoy-Mitchell has pursued many avenues for developing mentoring opportunities for adjudicated youth and youth in foster care to see beyond their current circumstances and to "walk" in their visions with their voice as their power as well as pursuing other ways to ensure that the judicial system is a community partner. She truly does "see faces and not just cases."

As she reflects on her retirement, Judge McKoy-Mitchell states, "Superstar athlete Serena Williams recently referred to her retirement as being an 'evolution.' Similarly, I understand that I am retiring from the Bench, but never from the community, and am thankful to 'evolve' and see how God will use me next."

For media inquiries in advance of the retirement celebration on September 1, 2022, please contact Natalie McKinney at Mecklenburg.CAO@nccourts.org.

###