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Passaic Welcomes Two Judges to Superior Court

Paterson, NJ. The Passaic Vicinage of the New Jersey Judiciary welcomes two judges to Superior Court. Judge Richard M. Freid, Family Division, and Judge Thomas J. LaConte, Civil Division, were assigned June 30, 2005.

Passaic Superior Court: A Family Tradition

Judge Freid began serving in his home county July 11 after serving for one year in the Essex Vicinage. He began his career with the Passaic County Legal Aid Society and went into private practice with his uncle, the late Edwin J. Nyklewicz, who became a Superior Court judge in Passaic in 1986.

Judge Freid served as Paterson city prosecutor and counsel to the Paterson Alcoholic Beverage Control Board, Paterson Board of Health. He was counsel to the Italian-American Police Officers Association of New Jersey, counsel to the Paterson Hispanic Police Association and served as an approved attorney of the New Jersey State P.B.A. Legal Protection Plan.

A graduate of Montclair State College and Rutgers School of Law, Judge Freid lived in Paterson for many years. He and his wife, Assemblywoman Nellie Pou, reside in North Haledon.

A Legacy of Service and Volunteerism

Judge LaConte was sworn in July 20. He was a senior partner at Cole, Schotz, Meisel, Forman, and Leonard, P.A. of Hackensack, specializing in complex construction, corporate and commercial litigation in the state and federal courts. He served as municipal attorney of the Borough of North Caldwell from 1979 until his appointment. He also lectured on contract and construction litigation for the Institute for Continuing Legal Education.

Judge LaConte has been active as a volunteer in the legal community for 20 years. He is a member of the New Jersey, Bergen County and American Bar Associations and has served in various capacities in the Passaic County Bar Association, including president from 1990-1991. He served as an investigator for the Passaic County Ethics Committee, as a trustee of the Passaic County Legal Aid Society from 1985 to 2002, and is a Master of The Justice Robert L. Clifford American Inn of the Court.

In 1998, he received the Professional Lawyer of the Year Award from the New Jersey Commission on Professionalism in the Law (nominated by the Passaic County Bar Association) and the Volunteer Lawyers Award for Outstanding Pro Bono Service and Commitment to Public Interest Law from the Passaic County Legal Aid Society.

Born in Paterson, Judge LaConte resides in Wayne with his wife, the former Jo Ann (Candy) Zinn. He has degrees from Lafayette College, Rutgers University-Newark and Rutgers School of Law. "We are pleased to welcome these distinguished jurists to the Passaic Vicinage," said Assignment Judge Robert J. Passero. "Our justice system will be

well served by their vast legal experience, their knowledge of the law and dedication to the principles of professionalism governing lawyers and judges."

(Note to Editors: Judge Freid and Judge LaConte are available for interviews through Aug. 12, 2005.)

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