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For immediate release: June 11, 2007

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Four Judges Appointed to Appellate Division of Superior Court

Four Superior Court judges will be elevated to the Appellate Division effective August 1, New Jersey Chief Justice James R. Zazzali announced today.

The Appellate Division of the Superior Court is New Jersey's intermediate Appellate Court. The 35 Appellate Division judges hear appeals from decisions of the Trial Courts, the Tax Court and state administrative agencies. The Appellate Division decides approximately 7,000 appeals and 7,500 motions each year.

Judge Carmen H. Alvarez currently serves in the Criminal Division of the Atlantic/Cape May Vicinage. Appointed to the bench in 1989, Judge Alvarez served in the Family Division until moving to the Criminal Division in 1993. She holds a bachelor's degree from Bryn Mawr College and a juris doctor degree from Catholic University Law School. After clerking for Superior Court Judge Nathan C. Staller, Judge Alvarez worked in private practice before her appointment to the bench. In addition, she has served as the solicitor for several municipalities in Cape May County. Judge Alvarez is a member of the Supreme Court Criminal Practice Committee; the Supreme Court Advisory Committee on Extrajudicial Activities; and the Supreme Court Committee on Judicial Performance. She also has served as the vice-chair of the Judiciary Task Force on AIDS and as a member of the Domestic Violence Working Group.

Judge Amy Piro Chambers was named to the bench in 1986 and currently serves in the General Equity Division in Middlesex Vicinage. Prior to that position she served in the Civil Division and was Civil presiding judge from 1997 to 2005. She also has served in the Special Civil Part and the Family Division. Prior to her judicial career, Judge Chambers served as a law clerk to Superior Court Judge Morris Malech before working in private practice. She became assistant counsel to Gov. Brendan T. Byrne in 1979 and assistant counsel to Gov. Thomas H. Kean in 1982. She was named deputy counsel to Gov. Kean in 1984 and served in that capacity until her appointment to the bench. She also served as acting commissioner of the Department of the Public Advocate in 1985. She holds a bachelor's degree from New York University and a juris doctor degree from Fordham University School of Law. Judge Chambers currently serves on the Supreme Court Committee on Public Access to Court Records and the Judicial Performance Committee. She is a former member of the Statewide Bench-Bar Liaison Committee on Civil Standardization, the Supreme Court Civil Practice Committee, and the Civil Model Jury Charge Committee. In addition, Judge Chambers is chair of the Middlesex County Courthouse Art Advisory Committee and has led efforts to install a number of art and historical exhibits in the public spaces of the Middlesex County Courthouse. She recently received the 2007 Distinguished Alumnus Award from the North Jersey Chapter of the Fordham University School of Law Alumni Association.

Judge Laura M. LeWinn was appointed in 2001. Assigned to the Family Division in the Mercer Vicinage, she was named presiding judge of the Family Division in 2004. Judge LeWinn holds a bachelor's degree from Wellesley College and a juris doctor degree from New York University School of Law. She began her legal career in the Office of the Public Defender before being named deputy director of the Division of Mental Health in the Department of the Public Advocate in 1974. She became acting director of the division in 1982. In 1985 she entered private practice, where she worked until her judicial appointment. She is the chair of the New Jersey Board of Bar Examiners, having served on the

board since 1990. In addition, she is a master of the George H. Barlow Inn of Court; a member of the Supreme Court Committee on Outside Activities of Judiciary Employees; and a trustee of the New Jersey Institute for Continuing Legal Education. She also has served as a member of the Supreme Court Committee on Character; a trustee of the New Jersey State Bar Foundation; and a member of the New Jersey Lawyer editorial board.

Judge Marie P. Simonelli was named to the Superior Court in 1998. She served first in the Family Division in Essex Vicinage before moving to the Civil Division in 2002. Judge Simonelli holds a bachelor's degree from the College of St. Elizabeth and a juris doctor degree from Seton Hall School of Law. She was a law clerk to Appellate Judge Samuel Allcorn and to Superior Court Judge John W. Bissell, who later became chief judge of the U.S. District Court for the district of New Jersey. After her clerkships Judge Simonelli worked in private practice before being named an administrative law judge in 1993. She is a past master of the Seton Hall Inn of Court.

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