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Judge Sybil R. Moses Announces Retirement First Woman Assignment Judge in New Jersey Courts

Bergen Vicinage Assignment Judge Sybil R. Moses, the first woman to be named assignment judge in New Jersey, has announced her retirement from the bench effective Oct. 1, 2008. She has been a Superior Court judge since 1987, and the vicinage assignment judge since 1997.

"My career as a judge in New Jersey, serving the finest Judiciary in the nation, has been more fulfilling than I ever could have imagined," Judge Moses said. "While I am ready to begin a new phase in my life, I am filled with mixed emotions about leaving my friends and colleagues here in Bergen County and around the state. They are truly my second family."

Judge Moses was a ground-breaker in many ways. She started the first courthouse child care center for parents to drop off their children while they tend to court business. The center celebrates its tenth anniversary this fall.

"As a mother who had been in the workplace since law school, I knew that child care issues for even a few hours could pose difficult challenges for parents, especially single parents who had to come to court, but had no one to watch the children. With the center, staffed at first exclusively by dedicated volunteers and now run by a member of the vicinage staff, parents could feel secure that their children were safe and could focus on the business at hand with no distractions," said Judge Moses.

The first project she undertook as assignment judge was to revamp the courthouse law library, then an uninviting and inaccessible facility. Today the library is an important resource, staffed by a professional librarian.

"Judge Moses' extraordinary contributions to the rule of law and the administration of justice will long continue to help shape our Judiciary. She has served with distinction as a leader among her peers, and I will miss her wise counsel," said Chief Justice Rabner.

For 11 years she also has been a member of the Judicial Council, an advisory body to the Supreme Court that includes the assignment judges, judicial conference chairs, administrative director and deputy director. While on the Judicial Council, she served as chair of the Council's Budget and Planning Committee, where she played a critical role in planning the course of the Judiciary's budget implementation strategies.

In addition, over the course of her 21-year career on the Superior Court bench, and before that during seven years as an administrative law judge, Judge Moses has served as a member of the Supreme Court Committees on Model Civil Jury Charges and on Criminal Practice.

Judge Philip Carchman, acting administrative director of the courts, commented on Judge Moses' dedication to the judicial governance structure. "We have a system that is unique to state judiciaries throughout the country because of the efforts of Judge Moses and others," he said.

"She has been a leader and we treasure her remarkable insight into the many issues confronting the Judiciary. She already has agreed to continue her service to the courts by accepting an appointment by the Chief Justice to serve on the Bench, Bar, Media Committee of the Supreme Court, chaired by retired Chief Justice James R. Zazzali, and on the Supreme Court Committee on Jury Selection in Civil and Criminal Trials, chaired by Appellate Division Judge Joseph F. Lisa. We appreciate her willingness to continue to contribute," Carchman said.

Before she was named assignment judge by retired Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz, Judge Moses, 69, had served as the presiding judge of both the criminal and general equity divisions of the Bergen County vicinage. She also had sat in the civil and family divisions.

"Judge Moses has been a trailblazer in her own right. As the first women assignment judge she made her mark on the judicial council and on the administration of the court system," said Chief Justice Poritz. "She has been both an excellent jurist and a fine leader. She will be sorely missed," she added.

In addition to her ongoing committee work after retirement, Judge Moses is looking forward to spending more time with her husband Stephen Moses of the law firm Sill Cummis and their five grandchildren.

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