



16th Judicial Circuit of Jackson County, Missouri

NEWS RELEASE

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Deputy Probate Commissioner Appointed for Jackson County Circuit Court

Attorney Mark A. Styles, Jr. is the Jackson County Circuit Court's newest deputy probate commissioner. Circuit Judge Kathleen A. Forsyth of the Probate Division appointed Styles to a four year term, and he will join the Court around the first week of November.

Styles, who is a senior associate attorney with the Hardwick Law Firm, is knowledgeable about the Probate Division, having been appointed by the Court on many occasions to represent the interests of various parties to probate cases.

"When the Probate Court asked me to serve as guardian ad litem for minors, I jumped on the opportunity knowing that this would give me more opportunities to interact with children who sometimes come from broken homes, and indigent families who were in dire need of adequate representation," said Styles. "I was equally ecstatic when the Probate Court considered appointing me as respondent's counsel, where I was able to represent individuals who have been alleged to be incapacitated or disabled."

Now he will be working for the Court in a new capacity as the judicial officer hearing these cases.

"I am happy to be able to appoint a deputy commissioner with so much ability and experience," said Forsyth. "He has a great deal of experience in handling decedents' and guardianship/conservatorship estates. In addition, this Division has appointed Mark Styles to serve as counsel for respondents and other parties to matters pending before this Court. He has done an excellent job."

Styles' background also includes working as an attorney with the Public Administrator's Office of Jackson County where he handled conservatorship and decedent estates dealing with complex real property, probate, Medicare/Medicaid compliance, and constitutional and contractual issues. He received a Juris Doctorate degree from the Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University in Houston, Texas in 2004. He obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance from the University of Missouri – Columbia in 2001.

"I have a passion for probate and a passion for serving people, and am looking forward to serving as the next deputy probate commissioner," Styles said.

Styles, who was appointed on October 3, takes the place of Deputy Probate Commissioner Scott R. Manuel. Manuel was appointed by the court en banc on September 19th as probate commissioner. This follows the announcement by Probate Commissioner Daniel Wheeler that he will be leaving the bench after 14 years to return to private practice at the end of October.

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