



16th Judicial Circuit of Jackson County, Missouri

NEWS RELEASE

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Jackson County Circuit Judge Edith Messina to retire

Jackson County Circuit Judge Edith L. Messina is retiring from the bench at the end of the year as she turns 70, which is the State of Missouri's mandatory retirement age for judges.

Messina was the first female appointed as a circuit judge in Jackson County when she was appointed to Division 12 by Governor Christopher S. Bond in 1984.

"Being a judge is such a privilege," says Messina. "I don't even know what words to use to talk about how much of a privilege it is to serve."

Presiding Judge Marco A. Roldan said, "Words cannot express the loss that Judge Messina will mean to this Court. Throughout all her years on the Court, she has been a mentor to the judges on the Court, and a constant force in making this Court the great Court that it is."

Messina first thought of becoming a lawyer when she was a teenager, although at the time there were no female role models in her life who were attorneys. After graduating from Avila College with a degree in English Literature, Messina joined the Peace Corp and served in Nigeria for two years as a high school teacher. After returning to the U.S., she obtained a law degree from the University of Missouri – Kansas City in 1974.

Messina was the first female selected by her colleagues to serve a two year term as presiding judge of the Jackson County Circuit Court during the years 1998 – 2000. She was honored in 2008 with the "Dean of the Trial Bar" Award by the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association (KCMBA) for her lifelong commitment to the profession.

Messina says most judges have a lot of curiosity, and it has led her in interesting ways.

While serving on the bench, Messina became intrigued by the psychological disorder of one of the litigants in her courtroom, and wanted more understanding of the diagnosis. She signed up to take a psychology class at Avila College. "I took one class and got hooked." She ended up going to class at night to earn the 56 hours for a Master of Science degree in Counseling Psychology which she obtained in 2007.

Messina will retire effective December 31 after 30 years of service.

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