

1999 Administrative Governing Board

Within the First Judicial District, the Administrative Governing Board represents the final authority for judicial administration. The Board's membership comprises the judicial leaders of the FJD along with the State Court Administrator. With the help of the FJD Court Administrator, they guide the District through the continuously improving systems for the administration of justice in Philadelphia. The Board's 1999 members are spotlighted on the pages that follow.



HON. ALEX BONAVITACOLA
President Judge (1996-2001)
Court of Common Pleas
Chair, AGB

President Judge Alex Bonavitacola is a graduate of Temple University and Temple University School of Law (from which he earned his J.D. and LL.M. degrees). Judge Bonavitacola was elected Judge of the Philadelphia Court of Common Pleas in 1973, retained in 1983 and again in 1993. He has served in the Trial Division, the Family Court Division and the Orphans' Court Division. The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania appointed him Administrative Judge of the Trial Division of the Court of Common Pleas of the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania on July 1, 1992, and he served in that capacity until December 1995, when he was unanimously elected by his colleagues as President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County. His term as President Judge continues until January 2001.

He is Past President of the Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges and served as Chairman of the Education Committee for three years.

During his tenure as Administrative Judge of the Trial Division, President Judge Bonavitacola implemented a novel and comprehensive civil case inventory reduction strategy (referred to as "Day Backward" and "Day Forward" Programs), which has received national recognition for the effective reduction of case backlog within the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County.

As a result of these efforts, in June of 1996 he was presented with the prestigious Justice William J. Brennan Award by the Philadelphia Bar Association.

In March 1996, by order of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, President Judge Bonavitacola was appointed Chairman of the Administrative Governing Board of the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania, a post he continues to hold. The Board is responsible for the day-to-day governance of the courts which compose the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania: the Common Pleas, Municipal and Traffic Courts.



HON. LOUIS J. PREZENZA
President Judge
Municipal Court (1999-)

Appointed to the Philadelphia Municipal Court bench in 1982, the Honorable Louis J. Prezenza was elected to a full term commencing January 1984. Following that, he twice received a 95% approval rating from the Philadelphia Bar Association and was retained in office in 1989 and 1995. In 1996 and 1997 he was appointed Supervising Judge of the Municipal Court Criminal Division. In that capacity he developed procedures for improving Court operations, created systemic improvements in case flow management, and cultivated productive relationships with Philadelphia Criminal Justice stakeholders. Judge Prezenza empaneled and chaired the Philadelphia Treatment Court Planning and Implementation Committee, which, after 17 months of intense activity, established the first drug treatment court in the Commonwealth in 1997. In 1999, his colleagues elected him to a five year term as President Judge the Philadelphia Municipal Court.

During his 18 years on the bench, Judge Prezenza has chaired or co-chaired numerous committees, panels, commissions, and boards. Some of these include: the Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee for Preliminary Arraignment; the Municipal Court Implementation Team for Statewide Automation; the Committee for the Destruction of Firearms and Other

Weapons; and the Philadelphia Pretrial Release Guidelines Committee. He also has experience as a member of the Criminal Justice Center Implementation Steering Committee; the Video Conferencing Project Committee; the Mayor's Prison Populace Management Policy Board; and the Criminal Justice Operation Task Force (Alternatives to Incarceration). Judge Prezenza has lec-

First Judicial District

ADMINISTRATIVE GOVERNING BOARD

tured on the criminal justice system to students at all academic levels and concerning courtroom practice and demeanor for attorneys in the District Attorney's office and the Defenders' Association. The judge has also been a panelist in discussions about Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol, Violation of the Uniform Firearms Act, and Domestic Violence. He has also lectured at Continuing Legal Education seminars about Municipal Court practices and procedures. Judge Presentza participated in a symposium to assist the Los Angeles Metropolitan Police Department in utilizing methods for expeditious case disposition and addressed the Pennsylvania State Conference of Trial Court Judges, the National Association of Pretrial Agencies, the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, and the Middle Atlantic States Correctional Association on Drug Treatment Courts. Judge Presentza is serving as a peer reviewer and faculty member for the United States Department of Justice Drug Court Programs Office and the Justice Management Institute for workshops and training programs for drug professionals. Judge Presentza has been a recipient of many awards. In 1990, he was co-recipient of the first Philadelphia Coalition for Victim Advocacy Award, and in 1998, he received the Golden Crowbar Award from the Pennsylvania State Conference of Trial Court Judges. He was honored with the 5th annual Cesare Beccaria Award from the Philadelphia Bar Association Criminal Justice Section, and by the Justinian Society for his contributions to the causes of justice and legal education. The President Judge is a graduate of St Joseph's University with a law degree from the Villanova University School of Law.

President Judge Little took office on January 8, 1998. He began his judicial career December 21, 1989, serving as Educational Judge beginning in 1993 and Emergency Judge from 1997. A dedicated public official of Philadelphia, he presided as the Director of Archives 1985-1990, headed Warrant Departments at Traffic Court and conducted investigations at Municipal Court in Private Criminal Complaints. He was proprietor and C.E.O. of a Philadelphia based Contracting Company from 1965 to 1975. He is a graduate of Wilson Law College, Minor Judiciary Law Degree, Philadelphia Police Academy and the Pennsylvania Supreme Court Constable Program. Recipient of numerous community and press awards, Judge Little serves on the Board of the Community Mental Health and Retardation Center. He is President of the Olney Betterment Alliance, Secretary of Lions International, Life Member of The Emerald Society and Board Member of the Korean-American Friendship Society.



HON. FRANK J. LITTLE
President Judge
Traffic Court (1998-)

The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania designated Judge Herron as Administrative Judge of the Trial Division in January of 1996. He previously was elected to the Court of Common Pleas in November 1986 and re-elected for a second ten-year term in November 1997. He served initially in the Criminal Section of the Trial Division, where he presided in both the List Room and Major Jury Programs. In his subsequent assignment to the Civil Section of the Trial Division, he served as Motion Court judge and as one of the original team leaders in the Major Jury Day Backward Program. During his tenure as a judge, he served on numerous judicial committees and chaired both the Judicial Accountability Committee and the Civil Management Committee.

As Administrative Judge of the Trial Division, Judge Herron worked to modernize and streamline the civil complaint, motion and discovery filing processes, initiate a commercial law civil trial program, extend a team leader case management model to the Criminal Section of the Trial Division, increase public awareness to the importance of jury service, implement jury service administration improvements and establish an executive administrative committee over which he serves as chair which is responsible for enhancement of adult probation and parole services provided to the judiciary and public at large. Throughout the duration of his assignment as Administrative Judge, Judge Herron continues an active trial calendar, including assignment within the new Commerce Program and as a Judicial Panel member of the Jackson v. Hendrick prison litigation.



HON. JOHN W. HERRON
Administrative Judge
Trial Division (1996-)

Prior to his judicial service, Judge Herron was an associate in the Wills and Trusts Department of the Philadelphia law firm of White and Williams, an Assistant District Attorney and, later, Deputy District Attorney within the Philadelphia Office of the District Attorney and served as Chief Disciplinary Counsel to the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. In addition to his frequent appearances as a lecturer and panelist in various continuing legal education programs, he has for several years taught law school courses in both Professional Responsibility and Trial Advocacy. In 1993, Judge Herron was appointed by

(Continued next page)

ADMINISTRATIVE GOVERNING BOARD *First Judicial District*

(Honorable John W. Herron, continued from previous page)

Governor Casey as the first trial judge and inaugural member of the constitutionally created Judicial Conduct Board and served a three-year term. He has held memberships in the Temple Inn of Court and the University of Pennsylvania Law School Inn of Court, and is a member of the Junior Legal Club.



HON. PAUL P. PANEPINTO
Administrative Judge
Family Division (1996-2000)

Administrative Judge Paul P. Panepinto attended Villanova University and received his B.A. in Political Science in 1971, and M.A. in Political Science in 1979; he received his J.D. in 1976 from Widener University School of Law. Before being appointed to the bench of the Court of Common Pleas in June 1990, and elected in his own right in 1991, Judge Panepinto served in the Family Court Division as a Probation Officer, Intake Unit Attorney, and as a Juvenile Master. A member of numerous professional associations, Judge Panepinto serves as a Board Member of the Alumni Association of the Widener University School of Law, and was presented the Widener University School of Law Outstanding Alumni of the Year Award in October 1994. In April 1996, Judge Panepinto was appointed by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania to serve as Administrative Judge of the Family Court Division. Also, in 1996 and 1999, Judge Panepinto was appointed by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania to the Domestic Relations Procedural Rules Committee and he was appointed by Governor Thomas J. Ridge to the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission of Pennsylvania. In 1997, Judge Panepinto was appointed by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania to the Pennsylvania Futures Commission on Justice in the 21st Century. He is a member of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. Also, Judge Panepinto is a member of the Roxborough Lodge Order of Sons of Italy and serves as a member of numerous other community groups and organizations.



HON. PETRESE B. TUCKER
Administrative Judge
Orphans' Division (1996-2000)

Appointed by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court as Administrative Judge of the Orphans' Court Division of the Court of Common Pleas in April 1996, the Honorable Petrese B. Tucker originally assumed office April 6, 1987, and was subsequently elected to a ten-year term in 1989. During her tenure in the Common Pleas Court, she has also served in the Juvenile Court Branch of the Family Division and the Criminal and Civil Sections of the Trial Division. Before her appointment to the Bench, Judge Tucker was Assistant Chief of the Rape Unit and Assistant Chief of the Child Abuse Unit of the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office. In addition, her prior work experience includes positions as Senior Trial Attorney for the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), and Adjunct Professorships at the Great Lakes College Association and Trial Advocacy Courses at Temple University School of Law. Judge Tucker is a Member of the Barristers Association of Philadelphia, the Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, and the Judicial Council of the National Bar Association. As a member of the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, National, and American Bar Associations, Judge Tucker has chaired and worked on numerous committees. She has received many meritorious distinguished service awards for her significant contributions to the community.



HON. ROBERT S. BLASI
Administrative Judge
Municipal Court (1997-)

The Honorable Robert S. Blasi was appointed by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania to his current leadership position as Administrative Judge of the Philadelphia Municipal Court in October, 1997. He is concurrently qualified to preside as a Common Pleas Court Judge for Civil Appeals from Municipal Court decisions, having been vested with that power through appointment by the Common Pleas Court President Judge Alex Bonavita-cola. Having been originally appointed as a Municipal Court Judge in January 1992, Administrative Judge Blasi was reelected to the bench in January 1998. The Administrative Judge's background includes positions with an engineering firm; Board Member, Vice Chairman, and Acting Chairman of the Philadelphia Zoning Board of Adjustment; and as a sole practitioner.

Judge Blasi adds dimension to his career as a lawyer and jurist through professional associations including his membership with the Philadelphia Bar Association and contri-

First Judicial District

ADMINISTRATIVE GOVERNING BOARD

butions to that institution though his work with the Real Property Committee, the Senior Citizens Judicare Project, the Lawyer Referral Service, and the Fee Disputes Committee. He is also a member of the Lawyer Club of Philadelphia, sits on the Board of Governors of the Justinian Society; and acts as the Director of the Widener University School of Law Alumni Association.

Judge Blasi's commitment to the community is reflected in his support of the Sons of Italy No. 2217 Greater Roxborough Lodge, where he has served as the President, Vice President, and Trustee. In addition, he has experience as the Past Director of the Rosary Federal Credit Union, a 4th Degree Member of the Knights of Columbus, a past member of the Pennsylvania Commission for Social Justice, Governor Casey's appointee to the Advisory Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, a Guest Lecturer at Holy Family College, and as a member of the Philadelphia Federal Credit Union Loan Review Committee. Finally, Administrative Judge Blasi has received numerous awards for his dedication and public service from the Sons of Italy, Widener University School of Law, the 21st Ward Veterans' Organizations, and the Sons of Italy in America.

The Honorable Bernice Ann DeAngelis was born February 17, 1940, the daughter of Benjamin M. and Josephine (Zachwieja) Soban. Of deep Polish ancestry; the Traffic Court Administrative Judge represents the third generation of her family to live in Fairmount (Art Museum area) section of Philadelphia. She is the oldest of three children with sister, Jane; and brother, Richard. Judge DeAngelis is a graduate John W. Hallahan Girl's High School where she achieved four years as first honor student. Later, she attended Holy Family College on the Dean's List. The judge served as Committeeperson for over 31 years in the same division and same ward, and she was elected Ward Leader three times, after serving as Secretary, Treasurer, and Ward Chairperson. Administrative Judge DeAngelis was also a member of the State Committee, a fundraiser, and a Member of the Democratic Women of Philadelphia. Prior to her election, Judge DeAngelis was employed in a State Senatorial District Office for almost 15 years with a Senator who served as Majority/Minority Chairman of the Transportation Committee. There, she specialized in constituent services relative to the Department of Motor Vehicles. The Administrative Judge ran in a City-wide election in 1991, and was elected Judge, to the bench of the Philadelphia Traffic Court – assuming office on January 6, 1992. In 1996, the Judge DeAngelis was appointed by Supreme Court of Pennsylvania as Administrative Judge of the Philadelphia Traffic Court. As such, she is a Member of the Administrative Governing Board of the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania. Administrative Judge DeAngelis is certified and trained by Wilson College, to serve as a Traffic Court Judge. In addition, she attended Reno Judicial College in 1993 and 1999; ABA Traffic Court Seminars at Georgia State University of Law in 1992, Tulane University in 1999, and Northwestern University in 2000. Judge DeAngelis is an Associate Member of the American Bar Association. She has been gifted with two children, Jeffrey Joseph and Janine Joanne; and enjoys her four grandchildren, Nicholas, Jeffrey, Ryan and Christine.



HON. BERNICE A. DeANGELIS
Administrative Judge
Traffic Court (1996-2000)

Nancy M. Sobolevitch was appointed State Court Administrator of Pennsylvania on March 31, 1986. Prior to beginning her service as State Court Administrator, Ms. Sobolevitch held positions that included a posting as Deputy Director of the Governor's Energy Council of Pennsylvania, and an assignment as Executive Assistant to the Speaker, in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. Augmenting her valuable previous experiences, and, along with myriad achievements during her career as State Court Administrator, Ms. Sobolevitch has maintained professional associations as a member and Immediate Past President of the Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA); Board of the National Center for State Courts; Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency; Pennsylvania Association of Court Management (PACM); COSCA Committee on Court Technology; National Association of Woman Judges; American Judges Association; Chairperson, COSCA Committee on State-Federal Issues; Secretary, Judicial Council of Pennsylvania; Chair of the Budget Committee, Judicial Council of Pennsylvania; and National Center for State Courts Governance and Nominations Committee.



NANCY M. SOBOLEVITCH
State Court Administrator
(1986-1999)

ADMINISTRATIVE GOVERNING BOARD *First Judicial District*

ZYGMONT A. PINES, ESQ.
Court Administrator
of Pennsylvania (2000-)

Zygmunt A. Pines was appointed acting Court Administrator of Pennsylvania in January 2000. As such, he is a member of the District's Administrative Governing Board pursuant to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court order establishing the makeup of the Board. The Office of the State Court Administrator was created by the Pennsylvania Constitution, which also authorizes an administrative staff to assist the Supreme Court. The statewide administrative duties include providing technical support and research to budgeting and managing fiscal matters for the Commonwealth's 1,600 judicial employees. Under the direction of the Chief Justice and Justices, the court administrator heads the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) in providing the necessary support for the supervision, legal representation, and administration of all of the courts in the Commonwealth. The court administrator's office also acts as a liaison with executive and legislative branch officials and agencies. Pines had been chief legal counsel for the AOPC for eight years before assuming his current post as Pennsylvania's seventh court administrator. Prior to coming to the AOPC, the court administrator was an assistant chief attorney for the Superior Court of Pennsylvania from 1978 to 1991 where he helped to create its Central Legal Staff. He also served as chief legal counsel to the Governor's Commission on Judicial Reform in 1987 and was an adjunct professor at both the University of Pennsylvania from 1986 to 1991 and Villanova Law School from 1984 to 1985. Pines previously had clerked for the Hon. James R. Cavanaugh and was an associate in the law firm of Raynes, McCarty, Binder & Mundy, 1975-1978. He has degrees from Wilkes University (B.A.), Cleveland State University College of Law (J.D.) and the University of Pennsylvania Law School (LL.M.). He authored many articles in various publications on criminal justice, appellate procedures and ethics. The State Court Administrator is also a member of the Judicial Counsel of Pennsylvania; Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency; and the Pennsylvania Association of Court Management.

In December 2000, the Honorable Frederica A. Massiah-Jackson was elected by her peers as President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas. By an Order dated December 22, 2000, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court appointed the Honorable Esther R. Sylvester Administrative Judge of the Common Pleas Court Family Division and the Honorable Joseph D. O'Keefe Administrative Judge of the Common Pleas Court Orphans' Court Division. By the same Order, the Honorable Fortunato N. Perri, Sr. was appointed Administrative Judge of Traffic Court.

A Pennsylvania Supreme Court Order dated January 8, 2001 reestablished the structure of the Administrative Governing Board (three President Judges, five Administrative Judges and the State Court Administrator) reflecting the appointments described above. In the same Order, Judge Massiah-Jackson was appointed Chairperson of the Administrative Governing Board.



FREDERICA A. MASSIAH-JACKSON
President Judge
Court of Common Pleas
Elected December 2000



ESTHER R. SYLVESTER
Administrative Judge
Family Division
Appointed December 2000



JOSEPH D. O'KEEFE
Administrative Judge
Orphans' Court Division
Appointed December 2000



FORTUNATO N. PERRI, SR.
Administrative Judge
Traffic Court
Appointed December 2000