

November 13, 2020

Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman
Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Milwaukee County Courthouse
901 North 9th Street, Room 201
Milwaukee, WI 53233

RE: Independent Redistricting Committee (IRC)

Dear Chairwoman Nicholson:

I am responding to your November 4th 2020 letter inviting me to serve on the Independent Redistricting Committee that was created by the County Board in 2016 to maintain the integrity of the supervisorial redistricting process, and to mitigate any concerns or claims of politicization. I am honored to be considered for this Committee.

I have reviewed County Ordinance No. 16-5 that established the creation and purpose of the Independent Redistricting Committee. As a recently retired Milwaukee County Circuit Court Judge, having faithfully served the citizens of Milwaukee County for over 20 years, I am confident that I meet the requirements of appointment to this Committee. I am also very familiar with Milwaukee County, having been a resident of the County for the past 33 years, and I continue to maintain my Wisconsin Bar License in good standing. My license number is 1008802.

I have enclosed a copy of my resume that sets forth my background and qualifications. I look forward to speaking with you and any other member of the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors concerning my keen interest in serving on this important Committee charged with the important work of maintaining the integrity of the supervisorial redistricting process. Thank you again for considering me for this appointment.

Sincerely,


Hon. Mary M. Kuhnmuensch
Milwaukee County Circuit Court Judge, (Ret.)


prosqr1@aol.com

HON. MARY M. KUHNMUENCH

prosqtrl@aol.com

JUDICIAL EXPERIENCE

Judge Mary Kuhnmuench has been universally described as a judicial leader with a passion for serving others. With boundless energy, unquestioned integrity, a keen intellect and a decisive nature, she enjoyed a distinguished career as a Milwaukee County Circuit Court Judge for over two decades. A critical thinker, strategic planner and natural collaborator with strong project management skills, Judge Kuhnmuench enjoyed a successful career as both a government and corporate attorney prior to taking the bench. She has been recognized and honored by both bar associations and community groups alike, having received the E. Michael McCann Distinguished Public Service Award from the Milwaukee Bar Association and the Wisconsin Law Journal Lifetime Achievement Award, where her judicial colleagues remarked that she has “left a lasting legacy on the bench and a high benchmark for those that follow.” Judge Kuhnmuench was inducted into the 2019 Fellows Class by the Wisconsin Law Foundation for her outstanding contributions to the advancement of justice in the State of Wisconsin. Judge Kuhnmuench continues to serve on non-profit boards, mentor young lawyers and newly elected and appointed judges, lecture on a variety of criminal justice issues for bar associations and community organizations, write for legal journals and social media, and serve as a guest political and legal commentator on the Steve Scaffidi Show on WTMJ radio.

Branch 5, Milwaukee County Circuit Court

August 1998 – January 2019

Judge Kuhnmuench was elected to the bench in 1998 and re-elected in 2004, 2010 and 2016. The Chief Judge appointed her the Presiding Judge of the Family Division, Misdemeanor Division and the Domestic Violence Courts. As the Presiding Judge, she was responsible for supervising the other judges, court commissioners and court staff serving in the Division. Judge Kuhnmuench’s judicial assignments included: Misdemeanor, Domestic Violence & Child Abuse, General Felony, Felony Drug, Homicide & Sexual Assault, Family, Civil and Small Claims. Judge Kuhnmuench presided over a robust motion practice in both civil and criminal cases, ruling on evidentiary questions, discovery disputes and summary judgment motions. She also presided over more than 400 jury trials and 200 court trials during her judicial career, including complex commercial litigation involving toxic tort, product liability, catastrophic injury, breach of contract, insurance coverage, wrongful termination and property tax liability.

Judicial Leadership

- President, Wisconsin Trial Judges Association (2009 – 2018)
- Executive Committee and Secretary of the Wisconsin Judicial Conference (2010 – 2015)
- President, Milwaukee Trial Judges Association (2005-2007)

Judicial Awards & Honors

- Fellow of the Wisconsin Bar Foundation (2019)
- E. Michael McCann Distinguished Public Service Award, Milwaukee Bar Association (2019)
- Lifetime Achievement Award - Leaders in the Law, Wisconsin Law Journal (2019)
- Mayoral Proclamation declaring November 15th, 2018 The Hon. Mary M. Kuhnmuench Day in the City of Milwaukee in recognition of her outstanding career in public service
- Founders Award-Lifetime Achievement, Association for Women Lawyers (2014)
- Leader in the Law, Wisconsin Law Journal (2011)
- Community Service Award, Association for Women Lawyers (2011)
- Mentor Award, Association for Women Lawyers (2009)
- Special Commendation, US Department of Justice, in recognition of her judicial leadership in the successful implementation of three dedicated Domestic Violence Courts in Milwaukee County as part of the Judicial Oversight Demonstration Initiative (2005)

LEGAL EXPERIENCE

City Attorney’s Office, City of Milwaukee

Milwaukee, WI

Assistant City Attorney

1989 – 1998

Represented the Milwaukee Board of School Directors and the Superintendent of Milwaukee Public Schools in all labor and employment matters, including contract negotiations with the Milwaukee Teachers Education Association, employee disciplinary hearings, arbitrations, administrative law hearings and appeals to the Circuit Court and Court of Appeals.

A. O. Smith Corporation

Milwaukee, WI

Senior Counsel, Automotive Products Division

1987 – 1989

Chief Legal Counsel for the president and senior management team of the Automotive Products Division of the A.O. Smith Corporation, a family owned, publically traded Fortune 500 Company.

- Served as a senior advisor to the president and senior management team on potential legal ramifications of all strategic initiatives and decisions.
- Advised management teams on a broad array of legal issues, including litigation, compliance, contracts, purchasing, safety, environmental, and labor & employment.
- Counseled management teams on all employment related issues for both union and exempt employees, including termination and disciplinary matters. Represented the company at all ERD, EEOC and other Administrative Law Hearings. Drafted employment and severance agreements, and developed and presented employment training programs to both line and management employees.
- Negotiated, drafted and reviewed all commercial contracts to meet business needs while minimizing liability. Proactively managed the contracts administration function as well as vender relationships from initial planning to execution and implementation. Developed and maintained master agreement templates, and created an internal database related to contracts and licensing agreements.
- Advised on the potential litigation risks of business decisions, and counseled on the appropriate strategy to defend or resolve litigation associated with product liability, breach of contract, safety and employment issues. Managed the selection and use of outside counsel, including fee structure.
- Developed, implemented and maintained a division-wide ethics and compliance program for all employees, including a confidential reporting process for employee safety concerns in all company facilities.

EDUCATION

New England Law

Boston, MA

Juris Doctor (Evening Division)

1979 - 1983

- Constituent Services Intern, Boston Senate Office of Senator Edward M. Kennedy. Responsible for responding to veteran’s inquiries regarding medical and disability benefits. I later served as a member of the Boston HQ Staff of the 1980 Kennedy for President Campaign, serving on the advance team for members of the Kennedy Family.
- Law Clerk, Attorney General Francis X. Bellotti, Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Saint Mary’s College, Notre Dame

South Bend, IN

Bachelor of Arts, English Literature & Speech Communication

1975 – 1978

- Dean’s List multiple semesters
- Student Body President and Student Regent to the Board of Regents
- Columnist for the *Observer*, University of Notre Dame & Saint Mary’s College Student Newspaper

University of Wisconsin

Madison, WI

- Freshman Women’s Rowing Team

1974 – 1975

BAR ADMISSION & ASSOCIATIONS

- Federal District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin
- Wisconsin Bar
- Milwaukee Bar Association, Board of Directors (2015-2016)
- Association for Women Lawyers, Board of Directors (2009-2011)
- Thomas Fairchild Inns of Court

POLITICAL, COMMUNITY AND NON-PROFIT LEADERSHIP

- Chief Election Inspector for the City of Milwaukee Election Commission (2020 Election)
- Chair, Biden for President, Wisconsin Leadership Council (2020 Election)
- Board of Directors, Girls on the Run (2019 - Present)
- Secretary, Executive Committee & Board of Directors, Jewish Family Services (2009-2019)
- Past Board Member of Milwaukee Homeless Veteran’s Initiative, Rosalie Manor, Milwaukee Women’s Center and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Milwaukee
- President, Saint Mary’s College Alumnae Club of Milwaukee (2011 - 2014)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Alverno College
Adjunct Instructor, Business Law

Milwaukee, WI
1990 - 1997

PROGRAMS AND PRESENTATIONS

- Panelist: The role of men in supporting gender equality in the workplace. Sponsored by the UWM Lubar School of Business Leaders Converse Series. (November 2019)
- Co-Presenter and Moderator: Closing the Gavel Gap, a one day conference at UWM's School of Continuing Education addressing the need for gender and racial diversity on the bench. Sponsored by the Association for Women Lawyers and the American Constitution Society (October 2018)
- Co-Chair and Faculty: The Voice of the Child in high conflict custody and placement cases. Annual Family Law Seminar, Wisconsin Judicial Education Program (March 2017)
- Co-Chair and Faculty: Building Bridges - Making the Case for a System-Wide Coordinated Practice Approach in Custody and Placement Cases where Domestic Violence has been present. Legal Education Program for Family Law practitioners and Guardian ad Litem. (April 15th 2016)
- Co-Presenter: Proposed changes to SCR 60.04 – Judicial Strategies for managing litigation with self-represented litigants. Wisconsin Judicial Conference (November 2014)
- Co-Presenter: Judicial Strategies in providing procedural fairness for both criminal and civil litigants. Wisconsin Judicial Conference (November 2012)
- Co-Chair: Get Your Gavel: A blueprint for breaking the judicial glass ceiling, Part II. A one-day Conference sponsored by the Association for Women Lawyers and Marquette University Law School training women how to navigate the judicial election and appointment process. (October 2012)
- Featured Speaker: Milwaukee Regional Office of the Department of Corrections Domestic Violence Training Program (April 2011)
- Keynote Speaker: Marquette University Law School, Law Review Dinner. Topic of the Speech: *The legal profession requires both intellectual competence and a moral compass* (April 2006)
- Co-Chair: Wisconsin Judicial Conference. Served on the planning committee, developed the conference curriculum and created, edited and produced a 25 minute video "What a Judge Sees." (November, 2005)
- Co-Presenter: Placement and Custody after Act 130, Annual Family Law Seminar Wisconsin Judicial Education Program (April 2004)
- Keynote Speaker: Stop the Violence Symposium sponsored by the Ho-Chunk Nation in Black River Falls, Wisconsin. A two-day workshop focusing on developing a Coordinated Community Response to address Domestic Violence (February 2001)
- Co-Presenter Judicial ethics in Judicial Elections. Wisconsin Judicial Conference (November 1999)

PUBLISHED WORKS

- "What a Judge Sees" Article in the Milwaukee Bar Messenger Magazine, Summer 2019
- Book Review: *The Good, The Bad & The Difference: How to tell right from wrong in everyday situations*, by Randy Cohen (New York, NY: Doubleday Broadway Publishing Group, 2002.) 284 pgs. Wisconsin Lawyer Magazine, December 2003.
- "Revisiting Judicial Compensation" Article in the Milwaukee Bar Messenger Magazine, Spring, 2016
- Book Review: *Sources of Power, How People Make Decisions*, by Gary Klein (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. 20th Anniversary Edition, 2017) 332 pgs. Wisconsin Lawyer Magazine, May, 2018