

NEWS RELEASE

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA

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SUPERVISING JUDGE OF UNIFIED FAMILY COURT ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT FROM SF BENCH

***During Distinguished Judicial Career, Judge Charlotte Walter Woolard Served In
Leadership Posts in the Court and in the Legal Community***

SAN FRANCISCO -- Judge Charlotte Walter Woolard, the Supervising Judge of the Unified Family Court, is retiring when her 6-year term expires on January 4, 2015, Presiding Judge Cynthia Ming-mei Lee announced today.

"It is difficult to leave the Court after serving San Franciscans for nearly three decades, including my time as a prosecutor prior to my judicial appointment," Judge Woolard said. "I want to thank the citizens of the City & County of San Francisco for their support and for giving me the opportunity to serve them. I also want to commend my judicial colleagues and court staff for their commitment to justice and to our community. I have been honored to share the bench with an exceptional assembly of brilliant and compassionate jurists."

Judge Woolard was initially appointed to the San Francisco Municipal Court by Governor Pete Wilson in 1993, and she was elevated by the governor to the Superior Court two years later. During her 22 years on the bench, Judge Woolard also has served as the Presiding Judge of the Appellate Division; presided over Civil matters, including Law & Motion and Civil trials; and Criminal courts, including Domestic Violence, Felony trials and Juvenile hearings.

Presiding Judge Cynthia Ming-mei Lee praised Judge Woolard for her steady stewardship of the Unified Family Court (UFC).

"Judge Woolard successfully led the UFC the past two years with integrity, passion, and exemplary dedication to the children, youth, and families in San Francisco," Judge Lee said. "She

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JUDGE WOOLARD/SFSC
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has been tireless in her efforts to secure timely access to litigants in Dependency, Family Law, and Delinquency as well as the restoration of the much-needed second Dependency Court. Judge Woolard inspires other bench officers with her dedication; quite simply, she is the best of the best. She has been a pleasure to work with and I will miss her greatly, as will her colleagues.”

Judge Woolard has devoted much of her time off the bench to serving in Court leadership posts and volunteering for legal associations and groups.

In the Court, Judge Woolard has served on the Executive, Courthouse Construction, Budget and Finance, ITG-Court Technology, and Civil Grand Jury committees. She also served as the former co-chair of the Community-Focused Court Planning Committee, and in 2000, she served as a Justice Pro Tempore, Court of Appeal, First Appellate District, Division Four.

During her judicial career, Judge Woolard also served on numerous professional groups. A member of the California Judges Association from 1993–2003, Judge Woolard served as Vice President in 2002-2003, Secretary-Treasurer in 2001-2002 and Chair of the Response to Criticism Committee from 2001-2003. She also is a member of the National Association of Women Judges; California Women Lawyers; Queen’s Bench of the Greater Bay Area; and The Lawyers’ Club of San Francisco, serving as the American Inn of Court President in 2002-2003 and the Scholarship Fund President in 1994-1995. She served as a Trustee of the San Francisco County Law Library Board in 2001-2004.

Judge Woolard also has volunteered as a speaker for the Bar Association of San Francisco, The Rutter Group, National Business Institute, American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers and other groups. She also has participated as a judge in numerous Moot Court competitions and Mock Trials.

Prior to her judicial career, Judge Woolard was an associate attorney for Wilson, Elser, Moskowitz, Edelman & Dicker, an insurance defense litigation practice. Before she went into private practice, Judge Woolard served as a trial attorney in the San Francisco District Attorney’s Office in 1980-1986.

A graduate of San Jose State University, she earned a J.D. from the Santa Clara University School of Law.

Judge Woolard’s retirement leaves three vacancies on the 52-member San Francisco Superior Court Bench.

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