



U.S. Department of Justice
Executive Office for Immigration Review
Office of the Director
5107 Leesburg Pike, Suite 2600
Falls Church, Virginia 22041

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Office of Communications and Legislative Affairs
Phone: 703-305-0289 Fax: 703-605-0365
PAO.EOIR@usdoj.gov @DOJ_EOIR
www.justice.gov/eoir

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Executive Office for Immigration Review Swears in 15 Immigration Judges

FALLS CHURCH, VA – The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) today announced the investiture of 15 new immigration judges. Acting Chief Immigration Judge Michael C. McGoings presided over the investiture during a ceremony held Sept. 23, 2016, in the ceremonial courtroom of the E. Barrett Prettyman U.S. Courthouse, in Washington, D.C.

After a thorough application process, Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Valerie A. Burch, Timothy M. Cole, Molly S. Frazer, Ivan Gardzelewski, Njeri B. Maldonado, Nancy J. Paul, Robin Kandell Paulino, Jennifer I. Peyton, G. William Riggs, Walter Hammele Ruehle, Ian Robert Simons, Mario J. Sturla, P. Michael Truman, Elizabeth L. Young, and Richard Zanfardino to their new positions.

“We welcome these 15 appointees to the immigration judge corps,” said McGoings. “With these appointments, EOIR now has 291 immigration judges, setting a new all-time high for our immigration judge corps and further strengthening our efforts to address the agency’s pending caseload of more than 500,000.”

Biographical information follows.

Valerie A. Burch, Immigration Judge, San Francisco Immigration Court

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Valerie A. Burch to begin hearing cases in September 2016. Judge Burch earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 2000 from the University of Rochester and a Juris Doctor in 2004 from the Penn State Dickinson School of Law. From 2012 to September 2016, she was an attorney for The Shagin Law Group, in Harrisburg, Pa. From 2007 through 2012, she was a staff attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania, in Harrisburg, Pa. From 2004 through 2007, she was a managing attorney for the Pennsylvania Immigration Resource Center, in York, Pa. Judge Burch is a member of the Pennsylvania Bar.

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Timothy M. Cole, Immigration Judge, Miami Immigration Court

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Timothy M. Cole to begin hearing cases in September 2016. Judge Cole earned both a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Bachelor of Business Administration degree in 2002 from the University of Texas at Austin, and a Juris Doctor in 2007 from the George Mason University School of Law. From April 2014 to September 2016, and previously from 2008 through 2012, he served as an assistant chief counsel for the Office of the Chief Counsel, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Miami. From 2012 through 2014, he served as a special assistant U.S. attorney for the U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Florida, Department of Justice (DOJ). From 2007 through 2008, he served as a judicial law clerk for the Miami Immigration Court, Executive Office for Immigration Review, DOJ. From 2003 through 2004, he was a volunteer for the AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps. Judge Cole is a member of the Virginia State Bar.

Molly S. Frazer, Immigration Judge, Florence Immigration Court

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Molly S. Frazer to begin hearing cases in September 2016. Judge Frazer earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1983 from the University of Iowa and a Juris Doctor in 1986 from the Drake University Law School. From 2004 to September 2016, she served as a senior attorney for Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in Tucson, Ariz. From 2000 through 2004 she served as an assistant chief counsel for the former Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), Department of Justice (DOJ), and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, DHS. From 1996 through 2000, she served as a sector counsel for the U.S. Border Patrol, INS, DOJ. From 1990 through 1996, she was an assistant county attorney for Story County, Iowa. From 1988 through 1990, she was an assistant city attorney for the City of Waterloo, Iowa. From 1986 through 1987, she was an assistant county attorney for Black Hawk County, Iowa. Judge Frazer is a member of the Iowa State Bar and the State Bar of Texas.

Ivan Gardzelewski, Immigration Judge, Denver Immigration Court

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Ivan Gardzelewski to begin hearing cases in September 2016. Judge Gardzelewski earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 2000 from Augustana College and a Juris Doctor in 2004 from the University of Oregon School of Law. From 2007 to September 2016, he served as an assistant chief counsel for the Office of the Chief Counsel, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Denver. From 2009 through 2010, he served as a special assistant U.S. attorney for the U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Colorado, Department of Justice, in Denver. In 2007, he served as a deputy district attorney for the Colorado Fifth Judicial District Attorney's Office, in Breckenridge, Colo. From 2004 through 2007, he served as a municipal prosecutor for the Lakewood City Attorney's Office, in Lakewood, Colo. Judge Gardzelewski is a member of Colorado Bar.

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Njeri B. Maldonado, Immigration Judge, Stewart Immigration Court

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Njeri B. Maldonado to begin hearing cases in September 2016. Judge Maldonado earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 2001 from Xavier University of Louisiana and a Juris Doctor in 2005 from the Loyola University School of Law. From 2009 to September 2016, Judge Maldonado served as an assistant chief counsel for the Office of the Chief Counsel, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Atlanta. From 2012 through 2013, she served as a special assistant U.S. attorney for the U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Georgia, Department of Justice, in Atlanta. From 2005 through 2008, she served as an associate attorney for Blue Williams LLP, in Metairie, La. Judge Maldonado is a member of the Louisiana State Bar.

Nancy J. Paul, Immigration Judge, Omaha Immigration Court

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Nancy J. Paul to begin hearing cases in September 2016. Judge Paul earned a Bachelor of Science degree in 1985 from the University of Nebraska and a Juris Doctor in 1988 from the Creighton University School of Law. From 2010 to September 2016, she served as a board member and treasurer for the Great Plains Colon Cancer Task Force, in Omaha, Neb. From 2008 through 2010, she served as a military commission judge for the Office of the Military Commissions, in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. From 2003 through 2010, she served as a military judge for the U.S. Air Force (USAF), at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb., and Travis Air Base, Calif. From 2003 through 2010, she also served as an adjunct instructor for the Air Force Judge Advocate General's School. From 2000 through 2003, she served as the chief of Operations and International Law, USAF, at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. From 1997 through 2000, she served as a deputy and acting staff judge advocate for the USAF at Hurlburt Field, Fla. From 1994 through 1997, she served as the chief of the Adverse Actions Division, USAF, at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii. From 1993 through 1994, she served as a deputy staff judge advocate for the USAF, at Plattsburgh Air Force Base, N.Y. From 1992 through 1993, she served as area defense counsel for the USAF, at Offutt Air Force Base. From 1988 through 1992, she served as the chief of Military Justice and General Law at Offutt Air Force Base. Judge Paul is a member of the Nebraska State Bar.

Robin Kandell Paulino, Immigration Judge, San Francisco Immigration Court

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Robin Kandell Paulino to begin hearing cases in September 2016. Judge Paulino earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1991 from the University of Arizona and a Juris Doctor in 1995 from the University of San Diego School of Law. From 2007 to September 2016, she served as a senior attorney and assistant general counsel for Legal & Corporate Affairs, Microsoft Corporation. From 1998 through 2007, she served as a senior associate and managing attorney for Fragomen, Del Rey, Bernsen & Loewy, in Santa Clara, Calif. From 1996 through 1998, she served as an associate attorney for Korenberg, Abramowitz & Feldun, in Calif. Previously, she served as an associate attorney for Swanson & Swanson, in Los Angeles. Judge Paulino is a member of the State Bar of California.

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Jennifer I. Peyton, Immigration Judge, Chicago Immigration Court

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Jennifer I. Peyton to begin hearing cases in September 2016. Judge Peyton earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1994 from Trinity College and a Juris Doctor in 1998 from the Case Western Reserve University School of Law. From April 2016 to September 2016, she was in private practice as a partner at Brown LLC. From 2003 to April 2016, she was in private practice as managing partner of Jennifer I. Peyton, Attorney at Law LLC, in Cleveland. In 2013, she joined the faculty of the Case Western University School of Law, where she served as an adjunct professor, and in 2006 she joined the faculty of the Cleveland State University Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, where she served as an adjunct clinical professor. Judge Peyton is a member of the Ohio State Bar.

G. William Riggs, Immigration Judge, Miami Immigration Court

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed G. William Riggs to begin hearing cases in September 2016. Judge Riggs earned a Bachelor of Applied Arts degree in 1985 from Florida Atlantic University, a Juris Doctor in 1990 from Nova Southeastern University, and a Master of Laws degree in 2002 from the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's School. From 2008 to September 2016, he served in various capacities for the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) at Camp Lejeune, N.C., including as deputy assistant chief of staff for Force Preservation, staff judge advocate, and circuit military judge for the Eastern Judicial Circuit. From 2008 through 2009, he served as a senior rule of law advisor and deputy rule of law team leader for the Provincial Reconstruction Team, USMC, at Camp Ramadi, Iraq. From 2004 through 2008, he served as a staff judge advocate for the USMC Forces Central Command, at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla. From 2002 through 2004, he served as the head of the Operational Law Branch, Navy International and Operational Law, Department of the Navy, at the Pentagon. Prior to 2002, he served in various legal positions for the USMC, including as a staff judge advocate, deputy staff judge advocate, assistant staff judge advocate, prosecutor, defense counsel, and legal assistance attorney. From 1994 through 1996, he was in private practice at G. William Riggs PA, in West Palm Beach, Fla. Judge Riggs is a member of the Florida Bar.

Walter Hammele Ruehle, Immigration Judge, Buffalo Immigration Court

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Walter Hammele Ruehle to begin hearing cases in September 2016. Judge Ruehle earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1976 from the State University of New York at Oneonta and a Juris Doctor in 1979 from the Union University Albany Law School. From 1993 to September 2016, he served in various capacities for the Legal Aid Society, including as an attorney, director of the Immigration Program, and director of the Upstate New York Immigration Law Project. From 1991 through 1993, he served as an associate attorney for the Law Offices of James J. Piampino, in Rochester, N.Y. From 1990 through 1991, he served as a staff and directing attorney for the Neighborhood Legal Services, in Hartford, Conn. From 1979 through 1990, he served in various capacities for the Farmworker Legal Services of N.Y., including as a staff attorney, supervising and managing attorney,

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litigation director, and legal consultant. In 2012 and 2013, he also served as an adjunct professor at the Cornell Law School. Judge Ruehle is a member of the Connecticut Bar and the New York State Bar.

Ian Robert Simons, Immigration Judge, Adelanto Immigration Court

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Ian Robert Simons to begin hearing cases in September 2016. Judge Simons earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1998 from Michigan State University and a Juris Doctor in 2001 from the Michigan State University College of Law. From 2009 to September 2016, he served as an assistant chief counsel for the Office of the Chief Counsel, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Detroit. From 2011 through 2013, he served as a special assistant U.S. attorney for the U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Arizona, Department of Justice, in Phoenix. From 2001 through 2009, he served as an assistant prosecutor for the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office, in Pontiac, Mich. Judge Simons is a member of the State Bar of Michigan.

Mario J. Sturla, Immigration Judge, Boston Immigration Court

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Mario J. Sturla to begin hearing cases in September 2016. Judge Sturla earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 2003 from Brown University and Juris Doctor in 2006 from the Yeshiva University Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law. From 2015 to September 2016, he served as a deputy chief counsel, and previously from 2008 through 2015 as an assistant chief counsel, for the Office of the Chief Counsel, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Boston. From 2007 through 2008, he served as a staff attorney for the Office of Legal Affairs, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, in New York City. From 2006 through 2007, he served as a judicial law clerk for the New York City Immigration Court, Executive Office for Immigration Review, Department of Justice, entering on duty through the Attorney General's Honors Program. Judge Sturla is a member of the Massachusetts Bar.

P. Michael Truman, Immigration Judge, Salt Lake City Immigration Court

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed P. Michael Truman to begin hearing cases in September 2016. Judge Truman earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 2001 from Brigham Young University and a Juris Doctor in 2004 from the S.J. Quinney College of Law, University of Utah. From 2011 to September 2016, he served as an assistant chief counsel for the Office of the Chief Counsel, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Department of Homeland Security, in Denver. From 2005 through 2011, he served as a trial attorney for the Office of Immigration Litigation, Department of Justice. From 2004 through 2005, he served as a law clerk for Justice Michael J. Wilkins, Utah Supreme Court. Judge Truman is a member of the Utah State Bar.

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Elizabeth L. Young, Immigration Judge, San Francisco Immigration Court

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Elizabeth L. Young to begin hearing cases in September 2016. Judge Young earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1999 from Hendrix College and a Juris Doctor in 2004 from The George Washington University School of Law. From 2011 to September 2016, she served as an associate professor of law, and previously from 2008 through 2011 as an assistant professor of law, for the University of Arkansas School of Law. From 2007 through 2008, she served as a visiting professor at The George Washington University School of Law. From 2004 through 2007, she served as an attorney advisor for the San Francisco Immigration Court, Executive Office for Immigration Review, Department of Justice. Judge Young is a member of the Arkansas Bar, the State Bar of California, and the Virginia State Bar.

Richard Zanfardino, Immigration Judge, Portland Immigration Court

Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch appointed Richard Zanfardino to begin hearing cases in September 2016. Judge Zanfardino earned both a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1989 and a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1990 from North Carolina State University, and a Juris Doctor in 1996 from the Columbus School of Law, Catholic University of America. From 2006 to September 2016, he served as a trial attorney for the Office of Immigration Litigation, Department of Justice (DOJ). From 1997 through 2006, he served as an attorney advisor for the Board of Immigration Appeals, Executive Office for Immigration Review, DOJ. From 2003 through 2004, he served as a special assistant U.S. attorney for the U.S. Attorney's Office, DOJ, in Washington, D.C. Judge Zanfardino is a member of the District of Columbia Bar.

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