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Superior Court Judge William J. Murray, Jr. appointed to California's Third District Court of Appeal



Superior Court Judge William J. Murray Jr.

The judges and court staff of San Joaquin County Superior Court are proud to announce the appointment of Superior Court Judge William J. Murray, Jr. to California's Third District Court of Appeal. Judge Murray was appointed to the Third District Court of Appeal by Governor Schwarzenegger on Tuesday and will be filling the vacancy created by the retirement of Justice Rodney Davis. Thankful for his opportunity to serve San Joaquin County and to begin his new role on the Court of Appeal, Judge Murray said, "I'm blessed and privileged to have been in positions serving the people of San Joaquin County for the last 24 years. Now I feel honored to have been nominated by the governor to serve on the Court of Appeal. Still, I have mixed emotions. We have great staff and great judges in San Joaquin County. Our court here is one of the most under resourced courts in the state. It is amazing we do as well as we do, but we are able to serve the public despite being under resourced because of the quality people here. I'll miss working with them, but I'm looking forward to continuing my public service at the Court of Appeal."

Judge Murray has served on San Joaquin County Superior Court's bench for the past fifteen years. Currently, he handles criminal matters and has handled civil matters in the past. He is the court's immediate past presiding judge. Prior to his appointment as a judge, he served nearly ten years with the San Joaquin County District Attorney's Office. Known for his community outreach activities, he was a co-creator of the court's innovative and award winning Court-Community Leadership & Liaison program and continues to coordinate that program. He was also a co-creator of the court's award winning Jury Compliance and Education Program and presides over the court's jury compliance calendar. He is also involved in a variety of youth outreach programs.

Judge Murray is also an active participant on statewide judicial branch committees. In 2003, Judge Murray was appointed by California's chief justice to a three-year term on the California Judicial Council, the constitutional policy making body for California's courts. While on the Council, the chief justice appointed Judge Murray to a number of leadership positions, including Vice Chair of the Executive and Planning Committee and Vice Chair of the Rules and Projects Committee. In 2005, Judge Murray was the chair of the Oversight Committee for the first statewide conference jointly sponsored by the Judicial Council, the California Judges Association and the State Bar. After leaving the Judicial Council, Judge Murray was appointed by the chief justice to serve on the Commission for Impartial Courts Retention and Selection Task Force as well as the Commission's Steering Committee.

Judge Murray is the current co-chair for the California Bench Bar Coalition, an association of judges, bar leaders, and legal services providers that lobby on behalf of the California judicial branch in Sacramento. He is also the co-chair for the Judicial Council's Joint Working Group for Jury Management and Administration. He is the Education Subcommittee chair of the Bench, Bar, Media Committee appointed by the chief justice. Additionally, he currently serves on the Judicial Council's Access and Fairness Advisory Committee.

Judge Murray has served as an instructor for judicial education programming since 2002. He is the author of resource materials on jury issues used by judges statewide. He served as an adjunct professor at Humphrey's Law School between 2002 and 2009.

Judge Murray graduated *magna cum laude* from Frostburg State College in Maryland in 1979 with a double major in political science and economics. He earned his law degree from George Washington University in Washington, DC in 1982.

Judge Murray has received several honors including: 2008 Black History Month Award; 2007 California Bench Bar Coalition Judicial Officer of the Year; 2004 California Association of Leadership Programs Distinguished Leader Award; 2003 Mediation Center of San Joaquin Peacemaker of the Year; 2002 San Joaquin County Bar Association Law Day Award; 2002 Rev. Benjamin L. Hooks Award; 2000 Stockton Branch NAACP Community Impact Award.; 1990 - Recognized as one of California's "Most Effective Prosecutors" in the *California Lawyer* (Publication of the California State Bar), October 1990, p. 41.

Staff and judges alike are very happy for Judge Murray, but are sad to see him go. Upon reflecting on Judge Murray's appointment, Presiding Judge Robin Appel said, "Judge Murray's contribution to the San Joaquin County Court is immeasurable. He has been a tireless worker on a state and local level. We are so proud of his appointment to District Court of Appeal and he will be greatly missed." Similarly, Court Executive Officer Rosa Junqueiro commented, "I am very happy for Judge Murray. However, I say that with mixed emotions. Judge Murray has been a tremendous asset to this court and his absence will certainly be noticed. His appointment is unquestionably a loss to us and an incredible gain for the 3rd DCA."

When Judge Murray will take his place on the Court of Appeal is still unclear. When the Governor appoints candidates to the Supreme Court and the Courts of Appeal, the appointees must be confirmed by the Commission on Judicial Appointments. Judge Murray's confirmation hearing will be held on December 10, 2010 in San Francisco by the Commission on Judicial Appointments. The commission has three members: the Chief Justice, the Attorney General, and the senior presiding justice of the Court of Appeal of the affected appellate district.

The Court of Appeal is California's intermediate appellate court. As an appellate court justice, Judge Murray will participate in the review of appeals from superior courts in 23 Northern California counties, including San Joaquin, Sacramento, Placer and Yolo counties. The Third District has the highest caseload per justice of any of the districts in the Court of Appeal.

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