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Date of Release: February 24, 2023
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Waukegan, Illinois

FOUR FINALISTS NAMED FOR TWO ASSOCIATE JUDGE VACANCIES

The Circuit Judges of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit have met and named the finalists for the associate judge vacancies. These vacancies are the result of Justice Elizabeth M. Rochford's election to the Illinois Supreme Court and Judge Christopher M. Kennedy's election to the Illinois Appellate Court effective December 5, 2022. Chief Judge Mark L. Levitt has certified the names of Gabriel J. Conroe of Highland Park, Matthew J. DeMartini of Antioch, Ruth H. Lofthouse of Highland Park, and Jim R.M. Newman of Lake Villa to the Director of the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts in Springfield.

All candidates were evaluated by members of the Lake County Bar Association's Judicial Selection and Retention Committee.

Mr. Conroe received his Bachelor of Arts in Behavioral Science and Law from the University of Wisconsin- Madison in 2001. In 2006, he earned his Juris Doctor from Chicago Kent College of Law. He was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 2006 and is a member of the Lake County Bar Association and Illinois Public Defender Association. Mr. Conroe has been with the Lake County Public Defender's Office since 2006 and currently serves as a Principal Assistant Public Defender.

Mr. DeMartini received his Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Marquette University in 1999. In 2002, he earned his Juris Doctor from the University of Illinois Chicago John Marshall Law School. He was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 2002 and is a member of the Lake County Bar Association, the Illinois Bar Association, and the Justinian Society. Mr. DeMartini previously served as an Assistant State's Attorney with the Lake County State's Attorney's Office, an associate at the Law Office of Rudolph F. Magna of Gurnee, an associate at the Law Office of Scott Gartner of Antioch, and is currently the owner of DeMartini Legal, Inc. of Antioch.

Ms. Lofthouse received her Bachelor of Arts in English Literature from the University of Florida in 2001. In 2006, she earned her Juris Doctor from the University of Illinois Chicago John Marshall Law School. She was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 2006 and is a member of the Lake County Bar Association and Jefferson Inns of Court. In 2016 she earned her master's degree in Business from DePaul Kellstadt School. Ms. Lofthouse previously was a partner at Grund & Leavitt, P.C. of Chicago and Highland Park, and currently serves as a Principal State's Attorney with the Lake County State's Attorney's Office prosecuting criminal felony cases.

Mr. Newman received his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and his Juris Doctor from the University of Iowa in 1996 and 1999, respectively. He was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 2003 and is a member of the Lake County Bar Association, Jefferson Inns of Court, and McHenry County Bar Association. Mr. Newman previously was an associate at Kathryn Barnhill Associates in West Des Moines, Iowa, an Assistant State's Attorney with the Lake County State's Attorney's Office prosecuting criminal cases, adjunct faculty teaching criminal law and criminal procedure at the College of Lake County, and currently serves as the Chief of the Criminal Division at the McHenry County State's Attorney's Office.

The Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts will prepare the ballots containing the finalists' names and mail them to the Lake County Circuit Judges. Each Circuit Judge will cast a secret ballot and, after the votes have been tabulated in Springfield, Chief Judge Mark L. Levitt will be notified of the results.

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