

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Applauds Confirmation of Seven Superior Court Judges

01/11/2022

Confirmations Further Murphy Administration's Commitment to Filling Judicial Vacancies

TRENTON - Governor Murphy today applauded the confirmation of seven Superior Court judges. The Senate yesterday confirmed Joanne Cocchiola, Lori Grifa, MeLinda Hawkins Taylor, Heather V. Taylor, Linda Hynes, Jill S. Mayer, and Aldo Russo to the Essex, Burlington, and Camden vicinages.

"This highly-qualified group of judges will make substantial contributions to our state's judiciary for decades to come," **said Governor Murphy**. "Since the beginning of our Administration, we have responded to vacancies in the courts with 116 nominations, of which 81 have been confirmed. I look forward to continuing to make progress on nominations to the Superior Court.

"I am especially honored that the Chief Ethics Officer in the Governor's Office, Heather Taylor, was confirmed as a Superior Court judge today," **continued Governor Murphy**. "Heather has served two gubernatorial administrations with an unwavering sense of integrity since 2014, and while I am sad to see her leave our Administration, I know that she will serve our state well in her new capacity."

Biographies

Joanne Cocchiola

Joanne Cocchiola currently serves as the Municipal Court Judge for the Township of Nutley. Previously Judge Cocchiola served as Associate Counsel for The New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority, for over 12 years. Judge Cocchiola is a former mayor of Nutley, and previously served on the township's Board of Commissioners. She earned her bachelor's degree from Douglass College, and her J.D. from Seton Hall University.

For a picture of Joanne Cocchiola, please click here

(https://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20220110/4e/29/c0/16/03432d4c6fbf4ce8f89e74a1/IMG_3689.jpeg).

Lori Grifa

Lori Grifa currently serves as a partner at Archer & Grenier, PC. She previously served as a partner as Wolff & Samson, PC. Prior to her time in the private sector, Grifa served the State of New Jersey in a number of high-level roles. From 2010 – 2012, Grifa was the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. Grifa also previously served as Chief of Staff in the office of the New Jersey Attorney General during the McGreevey Administration. She earned her bachelor's degree from Rutgers University, and her J.D. from Boston College Law School.

For a picture of Lori Grifa, please click here (<https://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20220110/01/d4/df/34/9f4b4e75d0e48504d8775337/grifa.jpg>).

MeLinda Hawkins Taylor

MeLinda Hawkins Taylor currently serves as the Municipal Court Judge for the City of East Orange. She is also the principal at the Law Offices of MeLinda H. Taylor, Esq.. Judge Taylor previously served as Essex County Assistant Prosecutor, and as Deputy Attorney General assigned to the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities. Judge Taylor has also served as Deputy Attorney General with the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights. She earned her bachelor's degree from Howard University, and her J.D. from the Rutgers University School of Law.

For a picture of MeLinda Hawkins Taylor, please click here

(https://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20220110/aa/18/91/1d/c235e9d4ee2124aee899b487/Melinda_Taylor_Headshot_Picture.jpg).

Heather Taylor

Heather Taylor currently serves as Chief Ethics Officer for the Office of the Governor of New Jersey, a role she has filled since 2014, spanning two gubernatorial administrations. She previously served the state as a Deputy Attorney General with the Division of Criminal Justice in the Office of the Attorney General. Prior to her service with the state, Taylor served in a number of private practice law roles, including as the Director of the products Liability Group at Gibbons, P.C., as a partner with McCarter & English, LLP, and as an Associate with Cummings & Lockwood, LLP. She earned her bachelor's from Syracuse University, and her J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law.

For a picture of Heather Taylor, please click here

(<https://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20220111/76/28/e5/8e/9c9bd63145de0af378654633/HeatherTaylor.jpg>).

Linda Hynes

Linda Hynes currently serves as a partner at Domers, Bonamassa, & Hynes, P.C.. She also serves as a Burlington County Commissioner. Commissioner Hynes previously served with the Law Office of Richard. E. Andronici, Woodland, McCoy & Shinn, as well as the law firm of Shapiro & Kreisman. She is a former Deputy Mayor of Westampton Township, and previously served on the Westampton Township Board of Education. Hynes earned her bachelor's degree from Rutgers University – Camden, and her J.D. from the Widener University School of Law. She also holds an associate's degree from Burlington County College.

For a picture of Linda Hynes, please click here

(<https://d31hzhk6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20220110/55/a9/0c/a0/e18ef55cc18ec59c74dc5046/LyndaHynes.jpg>).

Jill Mayer

Jill Mayer currently serves as the Acting Camden County Prosecutor. She was previously the Deputy Director of the Division of Criminal Justice for the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General. Prior to serving as Deputy Director, she was Bureau Chief of the Specialized Crime Bureau, and a Deputy Attorney General with the Gangs and Organized Crime Bureau, and the Casino Prosecutions Bureau. She earned her bachelor's degree from Dickinson College, and her J.D. from the Widener University School of Law.

For a picture of Jill Mayer, please click here (<https://d31hzlkh6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20220110/95/59/15/80/054706c50faa8d07f62a8736/JillMayer.jpg>).

Aldo J. Russo

Aldo Russo currently serves as a partner with Lamb Kretzer, LLC. He was previously managing partner as Russo & Della Badia, LLC. He has also worked as an associate attorney for the firm of O'Toole & Couch. He earned his bachelor's degree from Seton Hall University, and his J.D. from Quinnipiac University.

For a picture of Aldo J. Russo, please click here (<https://d31hzlkh6di2h5.cloudfront.net/20220110/86/e2/1d/80/3c2fcd868f3f6c51d666ca97/aldo-russo.jpg>).

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