

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON FOR PIERCE COUNTY

PRESS RELEASE

April 23, 2020

RE: Judge G. Helen Whitener Appointed to Washington State Supreme Court

On April 13, 2020 Governor Inslee announced the appointment of Superior Court Judge G. Helen Whitener to the Washington State Supreme Court bench. She will fill the vacancy of outgoing Justice Charles Wiggins who retired from the bench in March of this year. Governor Inslee had this to say about his appointment to the Supreme Court, “Judge Whitener inspires lawyers and non-lawyers alike with her relentless work to raise awareness for matters of race, justice and equity. She is tireless in her commitment to building a justice system that works for all, and as a Supreme Court justice, she will have an even greater platform to promote justice for everyone in Washington state. I am very pleased to appoint her to this bench and I look forward to her many contributions to our state for years to come.” Judge Whitener’s last day with Pierce County Superior Court will be April 23rd and her official swearing-in with the Supreme Court will be April 24th. A ceremonial swearing-in will take place once the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. Justice Whitener will hit the ground running as they have already assigned her a caseload. She will be working remotely for the time being as the Court is operating virtually. Pierce County Presiding Judge Garold E. Johnson stated Justice Whitener is a tremendous asset who will certainly be missed.



About the Washington State Supreme Court:

The Court is the highest court in the judiciary of the state of Washington. The Court is composed of a Chief Justice and eight Justices. Members of the Court are elected to six-year terms. Justices must retire at the end of the calendar year in which they reach the age of 75, per the Washington State Constitution. The current Chief Justice is Debra L. Stephens.

About Judge G. Helen Whitener:

Judge Whitener was appointed to the Pierce County Superior Court in 2015 by Governor Jay Inslee. Prior to her appointment Judge Whitener served as a judge on the Washington State Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals, and as a pro-tem judge in Pierce County District Court as well as the Tacoma Municipal Court. She had previously worked as a Prosecutor and a Defense Attorney.

Judge Whitener is also the 2019 recipient of the King County Washington Women Lawyers President Award; the Seattle University School of Law, 2019 Woman of the Year Award, the 2019 Tacoma-Pierce County Bar Association’s Diversity Award. In 2018, Judge Whitener received the Pierce County Washington Women Lawyer’s Woman of the Year Award.

In 2017, the Washington State Supreme Court appointed Judge Whitener to serve on the Washington State Minority and Justice Commission and on the Office of Civil Legal Aid Oversight Committee. She is a member of the International Association of Women Judges, the International Association of LGBTQ Judges and the National Association of Women Judges. Judge Whitener is a graduate of Baruch College, City University of New York, with a B.B.A. and holds a Juris Doctor from Seattle University School of Law.

About Pierce County Superior Court:

Pierce County Superior Court is the second largest superior court in the state of Washington and is proud to serve the citizens and visitors of Pierce County. The court is staffed with 22 judges and nine commissioners. There are three sites where court is held; the County City Building at 930 Tacoma Ave S., Tacoma, Remann Hall Juvenile Court at 5501 6th Ave, Tacoma, and Western State Hospital at 9601 Steilacoom Blvd SW, Lakewood. For more information, please visit our website at <http://www.piercecountywa.gov/superiorcourt>.

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