

June 1-3, 2021

**EVALUATING & SUSTAINING COURT-BASED
INNOVATIONS**

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Hon. Janet DiFiore, J.D.

Court of Appeals of the State of New York

Judge DiFiore, Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals and of the State of New York, has devoted her career as a judge and prosecutor to the fair administration of justice.

Judge DiFiore entered public service in 1981 as an Assistant District Attorney in Westchester County District Attorney's Office, remaining there until 1987 and returning in 1994 as Chief of Narcotics Bureau. Judge DiFiore was elected to the Westchester County Court in 1998 and went on to sit by designation in the Family Court, Surrogate's Court, and Supreme Court. In 2002, she was elected to the Supreme Court in the 9th Judicial District, and in 2003 was appointed to serve as the District's Supervising Judge for the Criminal Courts.



Judge DiFiore was elected as the District Attorney of Westchester County in 2006, heading an office that prosecuted approximately 30,000 cases annually. Judge DiFiore improved services for family violence victims, adopted innovative education and crime prevention programs targeting young people and gang violence and established the Child Fatality Review Team. Judge DiFiore also served on numerous commissions, including as Co-Chair of the Justice Task Force, which has successfully proposed reforms to address the systemic causes of wrongful convictions.

On December 1, 2015, Governor Andrew Cuomo nominated Judge DiFiore to the position of Chief Judge, and she was unanimously confirmed by the New York State Senate on January 21, 2016. On the same day that she was sworn into office, Chief Judge DiFiore announced the Excellence Initiative, which is focused on improving court operations and case management, increasing promptness and productivity, eliminating backlogs and delays, and providing high-quality justice services that support fairness and excellence in judicial decision-making.

As part of the Excellence Initiative, Judge DiFiore has introduced reforms to support civil legal services and lawyer pro bono for low-income New Yorkers, implemented the nation's first Opioid Treatment and Intervention Courts, adopted presumptive early ADR in civil and family matters, and introduced a proposal to amend the State Constitution to streamline New York's 11 different trial courts into a much simpler, more efficient three-level structure.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, Chief Judge DiFiore presided over the creation of virtual courts to ensure the continued provision of essential justice services while stopping the spread of COVID-19 by minimizing courthouse traffic and in-person interaction.

Chief Judge DiFiore is a graduate of C.W. Post College, Long Island University (B.A. 1977), and St. John's University School of Law (J.D. 1981). She lives in Bronxville with her husband Dennis E. Glazer, and they have three grown children and two grandchildren.

A virtual forum hosted by the New York State Youth Justice Institute