



# Supreme Court of Illinois

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## **SUPREME COURT ANNOUNCES NEWEST MEMBERS, REAPPOINTMENTS TO ITS COMMISSION ON PROFESSIONALISM**

The Illinois Supreme Court has announced the names of the newest members of the Commission on Professionalism. U.S. District Judge Sharon Johnson Coleman and Chicago attorney Martin V. Sinclair, Jr. will become members of the Commission on January 1, 2015.

"Judge Coleman and Mr. Sinclair will make great additions to the Commission on Professionalism," said Justice Robert R. Thomas, who serves as Supreme Court liaison to the Commission. "Each of them brings unique perspectives to the Commission and both will bring enthusiasm and commitment to the goal of fostering professionalism within the legal community."

Judge Coleman served as an Illinois Appellate Justice from the First Judicial District for two years before her nomination to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois in 2010 by President Barack Obama.

A native Chicagoan, Judge Coleman obtained her *juris doctor* degree from Washington University School of Law in 1984. After law school, Judge Coleman was a Cook County assistant state's attorney from 1984-1989. She served as an assistant U.S. attorney in the Northern District of Illinois from 1989-1993. In 1994, Judge Coleman returned back to the Cook County state's attorney's office, serving as deputy state's attorney and bureau chief for the public interest bureau.

Judge Coleman was elected to the Cook County Circuit Court in 1996. While there, she served as a jury trial judge in the Law Division after an initial assignment in the Child Protection Division. She served in that capacity until 2008, when she was elected to the Appellate Court. Judge Coleman had also served on the Supreme Court's Committee on Illinois Pattern Civil Jury Instructions.

Very active in the legal community, Judge Coleman serves as a member of several bench and bar associations, including the American Bar Association, Black Women Lawyers' Association, Chicago Bar Association, Cook County Bar Association, Federal Judges Association, Seventh Circuit Bar Association, and the Women's Bar Association of Illinois.

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## **Commission on Professionalism Add One**

Born and raised in Chicago, Martin V. Sinclair, Jr. is an associate at the law firm of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP. He has extensive experience representing public and private companies and individuals in complex commercial litigation. This experience includes representing clients in federal, state, and arbitral tribunals in all phases of litigation. In addition, Mr. Sinclair has experience defending civil investigations and conducting internal investigations in anti-corruption, fraud, securities and related matters.

As part of his practice, Mr. Sinclair is devoted to pro bono work. He has represented individuals and organizations directly and worked extensively on judicial policy matters within the State of Illinois.

Mr. Sinclair received his *juris doctor* degree in 2005 from Northwestern University School of Law. Upon graduation, Mr. Sinclair served as law clerk for the Hon. William J. Bauer of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. He is a member of the American Bar Association and the Chicago Bar Association.

In April, the Supreme Court appointed Dean Cynthia L. Fountaine of Southern Illinois University School of Law as a member of the Commission on Professionalism. She joined SIU School of Law as dean and professor of law in July 2010. Before that, Dean Fountaine was on the law school faculty at Texas Wesleyan University School of Law from 1997-2010; while there, she served as interim dean from 2006-2008. She taught at the University of Cincinnati College of Law, and was a visiting professor at Washington and Lee University School of Law in Lexington, Virginia. Prior to teaching, Dean Fountaine worked as a litigator with the Los Angeles law firm of O'Melveny and Myers.

Dean Fountaine received her *juris doctor* degree from the University of Southern California Gould School of Law. She is also an alumna of the Harvard University Institute for Management and Leadership in Education. She serves as a member of the Deans' Advisory Committee to the Illinois Supreme Court Access to Justice Commission.

Active in professional and community service as well, Dean Fountaine is a member of the Executive Committee of the Association of American Law Schools Section on Women in Legal Education, and the chair of the section's Ruth Bader Ginsburg Lifetime Achievement Award Subcommittee. She is also a member of the Illinois State Bar Association and the Jackson County Bar Association.

In addition to announcing the newest members of the Commission on Professionalism, the Supreme Court also reappointed Dean John E. Corkery of The John Marshall Law School and Wheaton attorney Edward J. Walsh, Jr. to the Commission.

The Supreme Court also reappointed Cook County Circuit Judge Debra B. Walker as chairperson of the Commission.

Judge Walker has served as a member of the Commission on Professionalism since its inception in 2005 and was appointed as a member of its predecessor body, the Supreme Court Committee on Civility.

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## **Commission on Professionalism Add Two**

Elected to the bench in November 2008, Judge Walker currently sits in the Domestic Relations Division. She was previously a partner at the Chicago law firm of Clausen Miller, P.C., concentrating in defending professional liability matters.

"I am pleased to have Judge Walker continue to exercise her leadership as the chairperson for the Commission on Professionalism," Justice Thomas said. "During her tenure as chair, the Commission has expanded its outreach to judges during the Judicial Conference and has used innovative social media practices to engage Illinois attorneys across the state and across generations."

The Supreme Court Commission on Professionalism was established in 2005 to promote among the lawyers and judges of Illinois the principles of integrity, professionalism, and civility; to foster commitment to the elimination of bias and divisiveness within the legal and judicial systems; and to ensure that those systems provide equitable, effective, and efficient resolution of problems and disputes for the people of Illinois. To further these goals, the Commission collaborates with lawyers, law firms, bar associations, law schools, and the judiciary throughout Illinois on a number of creative and ambitious initiatives.

One such collaboration is the Commission's statewide Lawyer-to-Lawyer Mentoring Program. Additionally, the Commission works with all Illinois law schools on professionalism programs for incoming first year law students, develops and approves continuing legal education courses on professionalism issues, promotes pro bono and diversity initiatives, and works with judicial circuits to design and implement professionalism programs.

There are 15 Commissioners, all of whom are appointed by the Supreme Court. In addition, the Director of the Minimum Continuing Legal Education Program and the Administrator of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission serve as *ex-officio* members of the Commission. The Commissioners serve without compensation for three-year terms. All funds expended by the Commission are from annual fees paid by Illinois attorneys with no tax dollars used to support the work of the Commission.

Jayne R. Reardon serves as executive director of the Commission on Professionalism.

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