



NEWS RELEASE

**New York State
Unified Court System**

**Hon. Joseph A. Zayas
Chief Administrative Judge**

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New Administrative Judge Named in the Capital Region's Third Judicial District

ALBANY, NEW YORK—Hon. Christina L. Ryba has been named Administrative Judge in the Capital Region's Third Judicial District. The appointment was made by Chief Administrative Judge Joseph A. Zayas in consultation with Chief Judge Rowan D. Wilson and Presiding Justice Elizabeth A. Garry of the Appellate Division, Third Department.

As Administrative Judge, Justice Ryba will oversee trial court operations in the Third Judicial District, which encompasses Albany, Columbia, Greene, Rensselaer, Schoharie, Sullivan, and Ulster counties. She will succeed Hon. Gerald W. Connolly, who is retiring after 19 distinguished years on the bench and over four years as Administrative Judge.

"Justice Ryba has a record of success in her role as the Third Judicial District's Supervising Judge of Supreme Court, instituting programs to streamline court operations and enhance public access to the courts. I am fully confident that her intimate knowledge of court operations and initiatives, combined with her collaborative management style, will benefit the District and those it serves," said Chief Administrative Judge Zayas.

"Justice Ryba is a champion of equal justice who understands the power of active listening in developing innovative solutions to operational and other needs and effecting meaningful change. She is a collaborative leader, widely respected by judicial colleagues, non-judicial personnel, and Court System stakeholders alike. I look forward to working with her in her new capacity," said First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Norman St. George.

Hon. Christina L. Ryba became the first Black person to serve on the State Supreme Court bench in the Third Department—which spans 28 counties—upon her 2015 election to the Court, where she presides over a range of civil matters. She has been serving as the Supervising Judge of the Supreme Court in the Third Judicial District since 2023. Prior to taking the bench, she held a variety of positions in the Office of Court Administration and the Appellate Division, Third Department, including as Special Projects Counsel to the Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Courts Outside New York City and Special Projects Counsel to the Presiding Justice of the Appellate Division, Third Department, respectively. Before joining the Unified Court System, Justice Ryba was an associate at the law firm of Nixon Peabody. Previously, she held several public service posts, including as a New York State Assistant Attorney General in the Litigation Bureau, a General Counsel and later Deputy Director for the Albany Community Development Agency, and an Assistant Corporation Counsel for the City of Albany, where she began her legal career.

Justice Ryba is strongly committed to narrowing New York’s access justice gap and in 2024 was named co-chair of the UCS Permanent Commission on Access to Justice. Additionally, she serves as First Vice President of the Association of Justices of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, chair of the Third Department’s Judicial Hearing Officer Selection Advisory Committee, coach of the Christian Brothers Academy High School Mock Trial Team, and as a trustee of her alma mater, Albany Law School, where she chairs the Law Committee and sits on the Executive Committee. She is a past president of both the Albany County Bar Association and Albany County Bar Foundation and sits on Opera Saratoga’s board, among her numerous other affiliations.

“I am grateful to the UCS judicial leadership team for this immense opportunity and for their confidence in my abilities to oversee the District’s operations and programs. As Administrative Judge, I will be traveling across the District, identifying local needs and challenges, and working collaboratively with the District’s judges, professional staff, and justice partners, to optimize efficiency and enhance the court user experience throughout the Capital Region,” said Justice Ryba.

In tribute to outgoing Administrative Judge Connolly, Judge Zayas added, “Judge Connolly has skillfully led the District over the past four years, creatively navigating the many challenges of our post-pandemic environment. We are thankful for his many contributions to the Court System over the course of his distinguished judicial tenure and wish him the very best in all future pursuits.”

Referring to Administrative Judge Connolly’s retirement, Judge St. George said, “It has been an honor and privilege to work alongside Judge Gerald Connolly as a judge and court administrator. He has truly advanced the delivery of justice and ably served the judges, staff, and people of the Third Judicial District. We wish him well in his retirement.”

“Justice Ryba has distinguished herself as a forward-thinking leader. I look ahead to our collaboration in her new role,” said Deputy Chief Administrative Judge for Courts Outside New York City James P. Murphy, adding, “We are indebted to Judge Connolly for his longstanding service to the Third Judicial District and congratulate him on his well-deserved retirement.”

Justice Ryba’s appointment will take effect on May 10, 2025.



Hon. Christina L. Ryba

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