

Biography



Adrienne Nelson, J.D.

Born in Kansas City, Missouri, Adrienne excelled academically and was afforded cultural opportunities. She participated in the Arkansas Governors program for gifted and talented students and in the Close Up government program. Adrienne was the first African American valedictorian of her high school since integration. She is a member of Phi Beta Kappa. Adrienne is well respected for her leadership, political acumen, strategic ability, networking and interpersonal skills that have served her well in professional and community realms.

On February 17, 2006, Governor Theodore Kulongoski appointed Adrienne as a general jurisdiction judge to the Multnomah County Circuit Court bench making her the second African American female judge in the state of Oregon. Adrienne has more than 15 years of legal experience and is an effective mediator. She has increasingly developed her ability to assess situations and diffuse them to the satisfaction of all parties involved. Adrienne has strengthened her administrative and human resources skills through various positions during her professional career. She has earned her Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from the University of Texas at Austin and her Bachelor of Arts degree in English and Criminal Justice Summa Cum Laude from the University of Arkansas.

Adrienne has been elected six times to a statewide seat in the American Bar Association (ABA) House of Delegates and is a member of the ABA Commission on Disability Rights. Currently she serves as the chair of the Northwestern School of Law of Lewis and Clark College Roosevelt Robinson Scholarship Committee. Adrienne was a member of the ABA Law Practice Management Magazine Board and was a member of the ABA Gavel Awards Standing Committee. Within the Oregon State Bar (OSB), Adrienne sat on the Oregon Law Foundation Board of Directors as President, was on the steering committee for the 2011 Convocation on Equality, and has served on the OSB's Affirmative Action Committee. She is a former President of the Multnomah Bar Foundation and also sat on the Multnomah Bar Association Court Liaison Committee. Adrienne is also an active member of the Owen M. Panner Inn of Court, the Oregon Minority Lawyers Association, the Oregon chapter of the National Bar Association and Oregon Women Lawyers (OWLs), which is the largest specialty bar association in Oregon. In 2002, Adrienne served as President of Queen's Bench, the Portland chapter of OWLs; Adrienne's tenure as president marked the first time Queen's Bench had a woman of color as its leader.

In February 2012, the Greater Oregon Chapter March of Dimes named Adrienne as one of the 2012 outstanding women in Oregon. The Northwestern School of Law of Lewis and Clark College named Adrienne as a distinguished honorary alumnus on October 1, 2011. In April 2011, National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) Region 8 awarded her the Equal Justice for All Award. In December 2007, Adrienne received the Oregon State Bar President's Public Service Award. Also in 2007, she was recognized by the Northwest Women's Journal as one of the 100 Most Powerful Women and as an Uncommon Woman by the Profile Theatre. In March 2003, Adrienne received the Oregon Women Lawyers (OWLs) Judge Mercedes

Deiz Award. The Judge Mercedes Deiz Award is awarded to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to promoting women and minorities in the legal profession and in the community. In May 2003, Adrienne received the Delta Sigma Theta Woman of Excellence Award for leadership and service in the African American community in the business/professional category.

Adrienne is frequently a presenter on the issue of diversity, professional development and leadership. She was an adjunct professor for the Northwestern School of Law at Lewis and Clark College where she taught a seminar on critical race theory.

In addition to her professional activities, Adrienne currently sits on the Girl Scouts Beyond Bars Advisory Board and the African American Mental Health Commission. She is a former member of the Multnomah County Policy Panel on Early Childhood Trauma, the Black United Fund of Oregon Board of Directors, the Portland Parks Board, the YWCA Columbia-Willamette Board of Directors, and the Rosemary Anderson/ POIC Board of Directors.