



Kansas Courts News Release

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Contact:

Lisa Taylor
Public Information Director
785-296-4872
taylorl@kscourts.org



Judge Sheila Hochhauser
Riley County District Court

District Magistrate Judge Sheila Hochhauser to retire

MANHATTAN – District Magistrate Judge Sheila P. Hochhauser will retire Aug. 11 after nearly 20 years of public service in Kansas.

Judge Hochhauser has been a magistrate judge in Riley County, in the 21st Judicial District of Kansas, since 2007. She previously served eight years in the Kansas House of Representatives and taught business law for nine years at Kansas State University.

Judge Hochhauser said that throughout her career she has striven to help those in need and advocated for diversity in the Kansas legal system.

Judge Hochhauser moved to Kansas in 1985, a year after graduating from law school at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, when her husband, David Margolies, joined the faculty at KSU. Three years later, she was elected to the Kansas House and served four two-year terms.

"It was not a sacrifice really," she said of serving in the Statehouse. "For most of the time I served, I felt good about the work the Legislature did for the people of Kansas."

She practiced law in Manhattan for 22 years before being appointed a district magistrate judge.

Judge Hochhauser recently received the Light of Hope Award from the Manhattan-based Sunflower CASA – Court Appointed Special Advocates – which cited her service and advocacy for children and families who find themselves involved in the court system.

"That was kind of them. I feel gratified. They cited that I take time to know each family situation, that I'm not just a cookie-cutter judge," she said.

Her husband, a professor of entomology at KSU, also is retiring. The couple, who have two children, plan to move to Delaware, closer to where they both grew up.

"We've been here 32 years, and it's been a great run, but it's time to be with our families," the judge said.

The 21st Judicial District is one of 17 districts in Kansas where judges are selected by merit rather than by direct election. Magistrate judges are chosen by a judicial nominating commission, which is made up of attorneys who are elected by fellow attorneys in the district and nonattorneys who are appointed by the local county commission. Each nominating commission is chaired by a nonvoting justice of the Kansas Supreme Court. Once appointed, magistrate judges stand for retention vote every four years, beginning with the first general election after they have been in office for one year.

State of Kansas
Office of Judicial Administration
Kansas Judicial Center
301 SW 10th
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1507
785-296-2256
www.kscourts.org