



Supreme Court of Florida

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Florida Supreme Court
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Chief Justice Labarga Presents Award to Miami-Dade Judge Stanford Blake

PONTE VEDRA BEACH – Miami Circuit Judge Stanford Blake is respected in his community as a “judge’s judge” and a humanitarian who has gone above and beyond his duty in service to the profession and community, Florida Chief Justice Jorge Labarga said Monday when presenting the judge with the Chief Justice Award for Judicial Excellence.

From carrying out judicial duties in his Miami courtroom and chambers to taking on additional administrative and leadership responsibilities on a local and statewide basis, Judge Blake has shown commitment to public service of the highest caliber, the chief justice said.

Labarga added that Judge Blake is equally known for his service to the community at large and for his personal warmth, humor, wisdom, compassion and courage.

The award was presented during the annual education program for Florida’s 599 circuit judges. Last month, Broward County Judge Robert Lee received the judicial excellence award for county judges. A selection committee of two county judges and two circuit judges, appointed by their respective judicial conferences, recommended both award recipients from nominations made by judges.

Every two years, the Miami-Dade County bar association surveys its members about the 123 trial judges in the county. Judge Blake consistently is rated among the top three, according to Miami-Dade County Judge Joseph I. Davis, Jr.

“Ask any of our judges, and they too rate Judge Blake at the top of the list,” Judge Davis wrote in his letter of support. “He is universally considered a judge’s judge and the judge many of us turn to for judicial advice and assistance. His character, ethics and legal knowledge

make him our consensus judicial resource.”

In 2012, the Miami-Dade County Bar Poll gave Judge Blake the highest rating ever achieved in the survey. Almost 99 percent of the more than 1,400 respondents to the poll ranked him as exceptionally qualified/qualified.

Judge Blake currently serves as the associate administrative judge in the family division of Florida’s Eleventh Judicial Circuit, which is comprised of Miami-Dade County. He served as administrative judge for the criminal division from 2002-2010.

The chief justice pointed out that these positions as administrative judge can be challenging. He cited the nomination letter submitted by Circuit Judge Nushin Sayfie, who wrote that Judge Blake “always has had the courage to make the right decision, even when it is unpopular, even with the spotlight shining on him.”

Judge Blake earned his law degree in 1973 at the University of Miami School of Law and his bachelor’s degree in 1970 at the University of Florida. He worked as an assistant public defender for five years before entering private practice until he became a judge in 1995.

He served as the chair of the Florida Conference of Circuit Judges from 2005 to 2006 and has taught the Handling Capital Cases Course at the College of Advanced Judicial Studies for more than 10 years. He teaches at the New Judge’s College as well.

He serves as an adjunct professor at the University of Miami School of Law, where he teaches litigation skills. He was a lecturer for the Department of Justice at a national symposium on indigent defense in the United States in Washington in 2010. In 2011, he was a presenter at the annual conference of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts.

As a judge, he has received many awards, including the Justice Gerald Kogan Judicial Distinction Award, the Thomas Davison III Memorial Service Award 2012, the Florida Council of Crime and Delinquency Distinguished Service Award 2012, the League of Prosecutors 2010 Justice Award, the Jewish Legal Society Rodef Shalom Award 2011, the Dade County Bar Criminal Justice Award, and the Alan Schwartz Judicial Excellence Award (2013). He was the recipient of the Judge Steve Levine Award for fairness, integrity and professionalism in 2014 and the Alumni Achievement Award from the Law Alumni Association in 2015.

“His dedication to the judicial branch has been enormous,” Miami-Dade County Judge Carroll Kelly wrote in a letter of support. “His hard work has made the judicial branch stronger and better.”

Judge Blake, who fought a public battle with throat cancer last year, is active with the Transplant Foundation and donated a kidney to his brother in 1996. He is also active with the Biscayne Bay Kiwanis Club and the Haven Center for the Mentally Disadvantaged. As well as being active in those organizations for many years, he has served in leadership roles for both. The same is true for his synagogue, Congregation Bet Breira.

Chief Justice Labarga created the Chief Justice Awards for Judicial Excellence in 2015. This is the second year awards have been presented.

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