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Chief Justice Names Judge Kevin Shanahan to Lead Somerset/Hunterdon/Warren Vicinage

Chief Justice Stuart Rabner today announced that Superior Court Judge Kevin M. Shanahan will lead the Somerset/Hunterdon/Warren Vicinage, effective Jan. 13, 2022.

Judge Shanahan will succeed Judge Thomas C. Miller, who is retiring after more than 10 years on the bench and the last 18 months as assignment judge.

“Judge Miller is a gifted jurist and a thoughtful leader who will be missed. I am confident Judge Shanahan will continue the history of capable, wise, and effective leaders who have served the residents of Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren counties,” Chief Justice Rabner said.

Judge Shanahan has served as the presiding judge of the civil division in the vicinage since July 2020. He was appointed to the bench on Aug. 18, 2014, serving first in the family division and then moving to the civil division a year later. Judge Shanahan also served as the presiding judge of the criminal division from 2017 to 2020. Nominated for reappointment this year, Judge Shanahan received tenure in August.

“The confidence Chief Justice Rabner has shown in my ability to lead the vicinage is extremely humbling,” Judge Shanahan said. “I hope to uphold the high standards that Judge Miller – and Judge (Yolanda) Ciccone before him – have set.”

Before being appointed to the bench, Judge Shanahan was in private practice, specializing in personal injury litigation. Prior to his judicial career, he regularly served as a faculty member at the Widener University School of Law and Hofstra University School of Law and taught trial advocacy courses through the National Institute for Trial Advocacy.

Judge Shanahan earned his bachelor's degree from St. Joseph's College in Philadelphia in 1977 and his law degree from Rutgers Law School – Camden in 1980. He clerked for Superior Court Assignment Judge George Schock and, starting in 1981, worked as an assistant Mercer County prosecutor for two years.

Beginning his career in private practice in 1983 as a partner in a three-person law firm, Judge Shanahan also served as part-time municipal prosecutor for West Windsor during those two years. From 1985 to 1988, Judge Shanahan worked as senior trial attorney for Selective Insurance Co. of America. He spent the next eight years at a private law firm representing plaintiffs and defendants in personal injury litigation, medical malpractice, and criminal defense matters at trial.

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