



## Yu sworn in to state Supreme Court

1 HOUR AGO • BY RACHEL LA CORTE

OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP) — Mary Yu was sworn in as the newest member of the Washington state Supreme Court on Tuesday, marking the first time the high court has had an openly gay justice.

The former King County Superior Court judge was sworn in by Chief Justice Barbara Madsen following a symposium on juvenile justice that was presented at the Temple of Justice by the Washington State Minority & Justice Commission, on which Yu is a co-chairwoman.

"It means everything," Yu said following the event, noting that it was a good experience for the young attendees at the symposium to witness her taking her oath. "This is just a symbol for those young people on the panel. They can come here too, and they could be a justice some day on this court."

Yu, whose mother is from Mexico and father is from China, is also the first Asian American and first female Hispanic member of the court. She is the sixth woman on the current nine-member court and the second ethnic minority, joining Justice Steven Gonzalez.

Yu was appointed by Gov. Jay Inslee earlier this month. She replaces Justice James Johnson, who announced his retirement last month because of health issues.

In a written statement issued following the swearing-in ceremony, Inslee said that said Yu "will serve on our highest court with the same exceptional standards and unyielding sense of justice that have guided her throughout her life."

Yu served as a King County Superior Court judge for 14 years. Previous to that, she was the deputy chief of staff to the late King County Prosecutor Norm Maleng. To keep the seat, she will have to run for election in November to serve the rest of Johnson's term, which was set to expire in January 2017.

As a superior court judge, when the state's first gay marriages started taking place around the state on Dec. 9, 2012, she officiated over the first King County marriage just after midnight.

In 2011, Yu, along with Gonzalez, received the Outstanding Judge of the Year award from the Washington state Bar Association for their work on researching racial disparity in the state's criminal justice system.