

Justice Mary Yu named law school's Woman of the Year

Seattle University School of Law
February 27, 2015



Washington State Supreme Court Justice Mary Yu is the School of Law's 2015 Woman of the Year. She will be recognized by the law school and the Women's Law Caucus at a luncheon March 6.

In addition to her accomplishments on the bench, Justice Yu is recognized for her dedication to improving access to justice, for her mentorship of students and young lawyers, and her service to the community.

"She inspires those around her with her ideals and values, her commitment to the rule of law and our system of justice, her belief in the dignity and value of every human being, and her insistence that those in the legal profession work for justice and serve the least among us," Dean Annette E. Clark said. "She inspires us to be better people, better lawyers, and better citizens."

Appointed by Gov. Jay Inslee on May 1, 2014, Justice Yu joined the Supreme Court after more than 14 years as a King County Superior Court judge. As a trial court judge, Justice Yu was known for treating everyone with respect and fairness and approaching each case with an open mind.

Before becoming a judge, she was deputy chief of staff to King County Prosecutor Norm Maleng and a deputy in the Criminal and Civil Divisions. Prior to attending law school, she worked in the Peace and Justice Office for the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Justice Yu has a deep record of service both on and off the bench, including mentoring young attorneys, law clerks and students, co-chairing the Court's Minority and Justice Commission, and teaching and serving as Jurist in Residence at Seattle University School of Law. She is devoted to the Professor Paula Lustbader's Civility Project of the Robert's Fund Foundation and to the Seattle Girls' School Mock Trials, serving as their judge for the last 11 years. She co-chairs the Washington State Bar Association/University of Washington Law School Leadership Institute and serves on the board of FareStart and the advisory board for the University of Washington School of Law's Gates Public Service Program.

She has received numerous accolades, including being named the WSBA's 2014 Judge of the Year and Washington Woman Lawyers' 2014 Betty B. Fletcher Judge of the Year.

She received the 2013 Latina/o Amicus Award from the law school's Latina/o Law Student Association.

Justice Yu was raised in Bridgeport, a south side neighborhood in Chicago, by immigrant parents; her mother came from Mexico and her father from China. She is the first in her family to graduate from college. She received her B.A. from Dominican University, her M.A. in Religious Studies from Mundelein College of Loyola University in Chicago, and J.D. from the University of Notre Dame Law School.