



# **NEWS RELEASE**

**New York State  
Unified Court System**

**Hon. Joseph A. Zayas  
Chief Administrative Judge**

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## **New Judicial Co-Chair Named to Guardianship Advisory Committee**

**NEW YORK**—Chief Administrative Judge Joseph A. Zayas today announced the appointment of Onondaga County Surrogate and Acting Supreme Court Justice Mary Keib Smith as Upstate Judicial Co-Chair of the Guardianship Advisory Committee (GAC), which advises the Unified Court System’s judicial leadership on guardianship matters and advances best practices statewide. She joins Downstate Judicial Co-Chair Hon. Charles Troia of Richmond County in leading the Committee. Surrogate Smith succeeds Broome County Surrogate David Guy, who will be retiring from the bench later this year.

“Guardianship cases are both intricate and sensitive in nature, carrying profound consequences for New York’s most vulnerable residents,” said Chief Administrative Judge Zayas. “Judge Keib Smith’s deep experience, nuanced understanding of these matters, and steady leadership — already evident through her service as a valued member of the GAC — will be instrumental as we continue strengthening guardianship practice across the state.”

First Deputy Chief Administrative Judge Norman St. George added, “Judge Keib Smith’s unwavering commitment to justice and mastery of the complex, often delicate, issues that define guardianship practice make her an exceptional choice to help guide this vital work. Her clarity, compassion, and rigor will greatly benefit the Committee’s efforts.”

Hon. Mary Keib Smith has served as Onondaga County Surrogate since 2018. Since her 2021 designation as an Acting Supreme Court Justice, she has also handled all Mental Hygiene Law Article 81 guardianship matters in the county. Before joining the bench, she was President of Cramer, Smith & Miller, P.C., specializing in estate planning, estate administration, elder care, and guardianships. She began her legal career at Sugarman Law Firm in Syracuse. A graduate of Syracuse University College of Law, she serves as Co-Vice Chair of the New York State Surrogate’s Association Executive Committee.

“I am thankful to Chief Administrative Judge Zayas and the UCS judicial leadership team for their confidence in my ability to lead the GAC, alongside Judge Troia, in its crucial mission. I will work energetically and collaboratively to help shepherd reforms to improve New York’s guardianship system and ensure justice for those in the community who oftentimes cannot speak for themselves,” said Surrogate Keib Smith.

Expressing his gratitude to outgoing Upstate Judicial Co-Chair David Guy, Chief Administrative Judge Zayas said, “Judge Guy has been an exceptional steward of this Committee’s work. His thoughtful leadership has helped further best guardianship practices statewide.”



*Surrogate and Acting Supreme Court Justice Mary Keib Smith*

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