



NEWS RELEASE

**New York State
Unified Court System**

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

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Chief Administrative Judge Announces Appointment to Appellate Term, Second Department's 9th and 10th Districts

NEW YORK—Chief Administrative Judge Joseph A. Zayas today announced the appointment of Hon. Elena Goldberg-Velazquez to the Appellate Term of the Supreme Court, Second Department, in the Ninth and Tenth Judicial Districts. A pioneering Latina, Judge Goldberg-Velazquez is the first Latinx Justice from the Ninth Judicial District to sit on the Court, which hears appeals from cases originating in the City and Justice Courts, and in the District Courts in Nassau and Suffolk counties. She will fill a vacancy arising from the recent retirement of Suffolk County Supreme Court Justice Elizabeth Emerson. The appointment was made with the approval of Appellate Division, Second Department Presiding Justice Hector D. LaSalle.

“Justice Goldberg-Velazquez is a skilled and dedicated jurist who brings a wealth of knowledge—and enormous passion for the law and the fair administration of justice—to the Court. She has broad judicial experience, including judicial experience in Supreme Court and City Court, along with intimate knowledge of appellate practice, acquired over the course of her nearly decade-long tenure as a Senior Appellate Court Attorney and later a Principal Appellate Court Attorney at the Appellate Division, First Department,” said Chief Administrative Judge Zayas. “She is a highly regarded member of the New York State bench, noted for her legal acumen, integrity, hard work, and sound judgment, and will, undoubtedly, be an asset to the Court and those it serves. I am delighted to welcome her to her new role.”

“I am eternally grateful to Chief Administrative Judge Zayas for this appointment,” said Justice Goldberg-Velazquez. “Thank you to my mother and father for giving me the tools to succeed in life and for believing in me. Thank you to my husband and family for your constant support and love. I hope to make my two daughters proud, so they know that they too can one day achieve all of their dreams.”

Justice Goldberg-Velazquez joined the court system in 2010 as a court attorney at the Appellate Division, First Department. In 2019, she was elected to Yonkers City Court, handling a range of civil and criminal matters. She was designated an acting Family Court judge, presiding over the Yonkers City Court's Integrated Domestic Violence Part, conducting hearings, fact-findings, and trials in child custody and other cases, in addition to hearing related criminal matters. She was subsequently elected to State Supreme Court in the Ninth Judicial District's Orange County, where she has presided over a busy calendar comprising a range of civil matters, including medical malpractice, matrimonial, personal injury, and labor law cases, among others.

Prior to joining the court system, she worked as an associate at Soto, Sanchez & Negron LLP, handling probate, foreclosure, matrimonial, and other civil matters. She began her legal career as a law clerk for Wilson, Elser, Moskowitz, Edelman & Dicker LLP. She is a graduate of Syracuse University and CUNY School of Law at Queens College, where she was managing editor of the New York City Law Review.

Among her many professional affiliations and activities, she is a board member of the Latino Judges Association and serves as chair of its CLE Committee; a member of the New York State Bar Association's Diversity Committee and the Association of Supreme Court Justices of the State of New York's Legislative Committee; and a past co-chair of the Jewish Lawyers' Guild's annual gala.

In tribute to newly retired Justice Emerson, Judge Zayas added, "We are deeply indebted to Justice Emerson for her distinguished and longstanding service to the Suffolk County Supreme Court and the Second Department's Appellate Term. She leaves behind a legacy as Suffolk County's first Commercial Division Justice, among her many other accomplishments. We wish her the very best in all her future endeavors."

Justice Goldberg-Velazquez's appointment is effective immediately.

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