



JUDGE TRINA THOMPSON

Judge Trina Thompson is currently serving as a Superior Court Judge in the Alameda County Rene C. Davidson Court. She has held this position since January of 2003. Thompson presides over Felony Jury Trials, Preliminary Hearings, Sentencing, and Motions. Her most recent high profile trial was the Ghost Ship Manslaughter case.

Judge Thompson is the newly elected Vice President of the Association of African American California Judicial Officers, Inc. (AAACJO).

Judge Thompson was elected in 2002 and when sworn in January of 2003 she became the first African American Woman elected to serve in the Alameda County Superior Court. Thompson was appointed in January 2001 as a Juvenile Court Commissioner. As a Juvenile Court Commissioner, Judge Thompson heard Juvenile Delinquency, Juvenile Dependency, Adoptions and Guardianship matters.

Prior to this Thompson managed a private Criminal Defense Practice, emphasizing juvenile, misdemeanor, felony and capital defense trials.

She also handled cases involving juvenile dependency, adoptions and guardianship. At the time of her appointment to the Bench she had accumulated sixteen (16) years of experience handling cases including misdemeanors, felonies, homicides and capital litigation.

Judge Thompson began her legal career in the Alameda County Public Defender's Office as an Assistant Public Defender representing and defending criminal clients through preliminary hearings. During her early journey, Judge Thompson also held positions with Judge Henry Ramsey, Alameda County Superior Court; the Law Offices of Hanson, Bridgett, Marcus & Vlahos; the National Center for Youth Law; the Law Offices of Howard Moore and the Alameda County District Attorney's Office.

Thompson received a Bachelor's Degree in Legal Studies from the University of California at Berkeley and graduated from UC Berkeley's Boalt Hall School of Law in 1986. She became a member of the California State Bar in 1987 and the Northern District of California, U.S. District Court in 1990.

In 2011, Judge Thompson was selected by President Barack Obama to serve on the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention under the direct supervision of Attorney General Eric Holder. The Coordinating Council is an independent organization in the executive branch that coordinates all federal juvenile delinquency prevention programs, all federal programs and activities that detain or care for unaccompanied juveniles, and all federal programs relating to missing and exploited children. Finally, the Council makes recommendations on juvenile crime prevention activities nationwide.

Thompson is a very humble person who truly recognizes the challenges of the communities and people she serves. Her ability to share her experiences and expertise to transform the lives of others has resulted in her being a frequently sought after speaker and lecturer. While she has shared with many professional groups locally and nationally, her true passion is sharing and mentoring the next generation and preparing scholars for the journey ahead.

Judge Thompson is currently an Adjunct Professor in the Ethnic Studies and Legal Studies Department at U. C. Berkeley. She serves as faculty for the Continuing the Dialogue series for the Center for Judicial Education and Research (CJER).

She has also served as legal commentator for the media and is widely recognized for her legal expertise and ability to communicate effectively with diverse groups from different socioeconomic experiences.

Thompson is a member of a variety of professional Boards and Associations. Her affiliations include: California Young Lawyer's, National Bar Association, American Bar Association, Alameda County Bar Association (past Board member), California Public Defender's Association, Charles Houston Bar Association, Women Defender's (past Chairperson), California Attorney's for Criminal Justice (CACJ, past Board member) and the Oakland Ensemble Theater (past Board member). Judge Thompson also served as chair of the Alameda County Educational Task Force for the Juvenile Court. The mission of this Task Force was to ensure the education of state-raised children. Thompson is currently a life member of the California Association of Black Lawyers the Charles Houston Bar Association, and the Association of African American California Judicial Officers, Inc. (AAACJO).

Thompson grew up in cities of Oakland and Vallejo California. She faced many challenges during her early years and persevered to successfully complete her education and establish her law career. Her success in the legal field and dedicated community engagement has led to many honors and recognitions on both the local and national levels.

Thompson is the proud parent of two adult children and one grandchild. When she is able to set aside the business of the law you may find her pursuing her other passion of photography. Photography has become a family affair and everyone has a camera, including the grand baby! She also enjoys creative collaborations with her son and daughter and occasional “get aways” to special places with her daughter. Music is also an important aspect of her life Jazz, R&B, Classical and good music!

Thompson is dedicated to planting seeds of knowledge, encouragement and hope in the current generation of scholars. When time allows, she teaches college courses and guest lectures. Thompson continues to work diligently to insure Ethical, Equal and Fair Access to Justice for all. She believes strongly in the Marriage between the Court and the Community through Education. A visit to the courtroom where she presides or the classroom where she teaches will enable the observer to see these stated beliefs in action! Judge Thompson is an amazing individual who defied the odds and continues to make a difference.

Judge Thompson has most recently received the following awards amongst many:

October 2019, Jurist of Distinction Award, Women Lawyers of Alameda County

August 2019, National Bar Association Raymond Pace Alexander Award

We must not, in trying to think about how we can make a big difference, ignore the small daily differences we can make which, over time, add up to big differences that we often cannot foresee. - Marian Wright Edelman.

List of Lectures and High Profile Cases to be provided upon request.

Judge Trina Thompson – Bio
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