

**PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT
John Adams Courthouse
One Pemberton Square
Boston, Massachusetts 02108**

CONTACT: Jennifer Donahue/Erika Gully-Santiago
617/557-1114
Jennifer.Donahue@sjc.state.ma.us

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**Honorable Geraldine S. Hines Sworn In as
Associate Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court**

BOSTON, MA -- Governor Deval Patrick today administered the Oath of Office to the Honorable Geraldine S. Hines, who was sworn in as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court before an assembly of several hundred people in the Great Hall of the John Adams Courthouse. She is filling a seat on the bench that was vacated by the Honorable Ralph D. Gants, who was sworn in as Chief Justice on July 28. Justice Hines is the first African-American woman appointed to the Supreme Judicial Court.

"Throughout her career, Justice Hines has been an inspiration," said Governor Patrick. "I am confident that the Supreme Judicial Court and the people of the Commonwealth will be well served by her extraordinary combination of intelligence and compassion."

The ceremony began with an invocation by Rahsaan Hall, Deputy Director of the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, and an Associate Minister at the St. Paul African Episcopal Church. Retired Superior Court Judge Barbara Dortch-Okara, a professor of law at New England Law School and Chairman of the State Ethics Commission, served as Mistress of Ceremonies. Superior Court Judge Christopher J. Muse was a guest speaker. Musical performances were provided by retired Boston Municipal Court Judge Milton Wright, Valerie Caldwell and accompanist Rev. Stephen Hunter.

Justice Hines thanked Governor Patrick and said that she was "grateful that you chose me for the honor of breaking yet another barrier, for choosing me as the first African-American woman to serve on this Court."

"I know in my heart that this day would not be possible without the sacrifice of countless men and women whose names have been lost to history, unsung heroes all," Justice Hines said. "I am mindful today that we are still commemorating the 50th anniversary of Freedom Summer, a time in our history that was at once terrifying and hopeful. My hero, Fannie Lou Hamer and others risked everything for just the possibility that a day like today could happen."

Justice Hines was born in Scott, Mississippi, and grew up in the Mississippi Delta. She graduated from Tougaloo College in 1968 and the University of Wisconsin Law School in 1971. Upon graduation she became a staff attorney at the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, engaging in

prisoner's rights litigation, and then, from 1973 to 1977 practiced criminal law with the Roxbury Defenders' Committee eventually becoming Director of the Committee.

After an MIT fellowship researching policy initiatives to address the issue of police misconduct in communities of color, she served as co-counsel in *Commonwealth v. Willie Sanders*. From 1979-1982 she litigated civil rights cases relating to discrimination in education and advised on special education law while a staff attorney at the Harvard University Center for Law and Education.

Justice Hines entered private practice in 1982, appearing in state and federal courts on criminal, administrative, labor and family law matters. She continued to litigate civil rights cases, including employment discrimination and police misconduct claims, as a founding partner in the first law firm of women of color in the New England region. Governor Paul Cellucci appointed Justice Hines as Associate Justice of the Superior Court in 2001. Governor Deval Patrick appointed her as an Associate Justice of the Appeals Court in 2013.

Justice Hines has been active in a number of civic and community organizations, some of which include the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Lawyers Guild and the National Conference of Black Lawyers. She has also observed elections and investigated human rights abuses in Africa and the Middle East. She was appointed to serve on both the Judicial Nominating Council and the Judicial Nominating Commission. Justice Hines has been an adjunct faculty member at Northeastern University Law School since 1980, and has frequently presented educational programs for attorneys and judges, including MCLE, where she has both presented and published materials in diverse subjects such as trial advocacy, federal civil litigation and municipal torts and civil rights claims.

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