

**INVESTITURE OF**

**JUSTICE BONNIE A. BULLA**

Wednesday, May 22, 2019  
3 p.m.

Las Vegas City Hall, Council Chambers  
Las Vegas, Nevada



**IN THE SUPREME COURT AND THE  
COURT OF APPEALS OF THE  
STATE OF NEVADA**

CHIEF JUSTICE MARK GIBBONS  
JUSTICE KRISTINA PICKERING  
JUSTICE JAMES W. HARDESTY  
JUSTICE RON D. PARRAGUIRRE  
JUSTICE LIDIA S. STIGLICH  
JUSTICE ELISSA F. CADISH  
JUSTICE ABBI SILVER

CHIEF JUDGE MICHAEL P. GIBBONS  
JUDGE JEROME T. TAO

STEVE SISOLAK, GOVERNOR OF NEVADA

**INVESTITURE OF BONNIE A. BULLA**  
CHIEF DISTRICT JUDGE LINDA BELL  
JUDGE TIM WILLIAMS  
BARBARA BUCKLEY

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# INVESTITURE PROCEEDING

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CLERK OF THE COURT:

The Supreme Court of the State of Nevada convenes in special session for administration of the official oath of office to the Honorable Bonnie A. Bulla. Chief Justice Mark Gibbons presiding.

CHIEF JUSTICE GIBBONS:

Okay. Please remain standing, please. The Nevada Supreme Court is now in special session to conduct the investiture of Judge Bonnie A. Bulla. We will proceed with the invocation, the presentation of colors, and the Pledge of Allegiance. Please remain standing for the invocation given by Yolanda Roesner. Yolanda?

Ms. ROESNER:

Please pray with me. Dear Lord, thank You for this opportunity to gather as we celebrate our friend, our colleague, and our beloved family member, Bonnie Bulla's appointment to the Nevada Court of Appeals. We celebrate Your many blessings bestowed upon her and all of us here on this joyous occasion.

We are grateful to live in this beautiful state we call home and for all You have given us. Help us to live in the present and never take our many gifts for granted. Please continue to watch over all of us, especially those who are sick or in need of healing. Let us triumph each day, helping those we can, and appreciating the support and love we are given from those around us.

Lord, watch over our judges and decision makers. Give them wisdom and discernment and help them to act with honor and integrity. Guide us to live as You have taught us to live. Teach us to forgive as You have shown us forgiveness. Lead us to love as You have shown us love. We entrust the past to Your mercy, the present to Your love, and the future to Your providence. May we all live strong in our faith. Guide us throughout this day and each day that follows to go forth glorifying You by our actions and deeds. In Your holy name, we pray. Amen.

CHIEF JUSTICE GIBBONS:

Thank you, Yolanda. Please remain standing for the presentation of colors by the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department Color Guard, and the Pledge of Allegiance to be led by the Springberg family.

IN UNISON:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

CHIEF JUSTICE GIBBONS:

Thank you. Please be seated, ladies and gentlemen, as soon as the color guard leaves. Okay, please be seated.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. Thank you for coming on this cold, windy day. We never could have imagined that on May 22 when this event was planned, but thank you for being here for this very special occasion for the investiture of Judge Bonnie A. Bulla. We're all very much pleased that so many of you have come to attend, and all the fine members of our Nevada judiciary as well.

At this time what I would like to do is introduce my colleagues who are sitting up here on the bench, and I'll start on my left. First, we have at the very far end, Senior Justice Michael Cherry. And while Justice Cherry deserves the applause, why don't we hold the applause until we get finished. We don't want to take all the time away from Judge Bulla. This is her day and her event.

Next to Justice Cherry is Justice Abbi Silver; Justice Elissa Cadish; Justice Lidia Stiglich; Justice Ron Parraguire; Associate Chief Justice Kristina Pickering; then on my right, Senior Justice Michael Douglas; next to Justice Douglas is Senior Justice Miriam Shearing—and I'll have comments about Miriam in a moment—then next to Justice Shearing we have Chief Judge Michael Gibbons from the Nevada Court of Appeals; and next to Chief Judge Gibbons is Judge Jerry Tao from the Nevada Court of Appeals.

Also, before we go ahead with the introduction of our other judges, just a comment about Justice Shearing. Justice Shearing was the first woman elected to the Nevada District Court in 1982, and in 1992, she became the first woman ever elected to the Nevada Supreme Court. And Miriam, it's such an honor to have you up here sitting with us, because I think when you were elected in 1992 with all those male colleagues, you never would see a day where you were sitting in session with a female majority on the supreme court, and now you are today. And Justice Shearing said she had forgotten her robe today, but I urged her to come up and sit with us. I think with her honors and her distinguished career—we can forgo the robe for today, and it's just a pleasure to have her up sitting with us as well.

At this time I would like to introduce the members of the judiciary that are present with us. Give me a moment, please, and I'll get the list.

From the Eighth Judicial District Court, we have Chief Judge Linda Bell; for the Presiding Family Court, Judge Bryce Duckworth; Judge Timothy Williams; Judge Jacqueline Bluth; Judge Kathleen Delaney; Judge Mark Denton; Judge Carolyn Ellsworth; Judge Adriana Escobar; Judge Joe Hardy; Judge Susan Johnson; Judge Tierra Jones; Judge Richard Scotti; Judge Cristina Silva; Judge Sandra Pomrenze; Senior Judge Valerie Vega; Senior Judge David Barker; also from the Eighth Judicial District, Discovery Commissioner Erin Truman; we

have a special guest here from Hawaii, it's District Judge Margaret Masunaga, who has made the longest trip, all the way from Kona, Hawaii, to be here today. Margaret, thank you so much for coming to celebrate this event with Judge Bulla. Also from the Las Vegas Justice Court, we have Judge Melisa De La Garza and Judge Elana Lee Graham.

In addition to the members of our judiciary, we have some other special guests that are here today I would like to acknowledge. First of all, we have Rachel Anderson, who is Assistant to Attorney General Aaron Ford, and Rachel is a former Boyd Law School professor as well. We also have JoNell Thomas, the Clark County Special Public Defender; JoNell, I see you out there as well.

We're really pleased to have with us members of Judge Bulla's family that are here with us as well, and that includes her husband, Michael Phillips; Michael is in front there; her father, Robert Bulla; brother John Bulla; and her sister Kristi Bulla.

Okay, and are there any elected officials or other dignitaries I inadvertently missed that would like to be acknowledged? Well, a lot of people deserve to be acknowledged in this room, but some great attorneys and all as well, and thank you for being here. Oh, Judge George? Okay. Is Judge George in the back? Justice Douglas said he thought he saw Judge George. Okay, maybe not. At this time we will go ahead and commence the formal investiture proceedings. And it's my pleasure to introduce first the Chief District Judge of the Eighth Judicial District, Linda Bell.

**CHIEF JUDGE BELL:**

Good afternoon, Chief Justice Gibbons—I really don't like having all of you behind me like that—justices, judges, and honored guests. I'm truly privileged today to be part of this investiture for my friend, Judge Bonnie Bulla.

This is a bittersweet occasion for me and for the Eighth Judicial District Court because we have lost an incredible discovery commissioner, and I have also lost the opportunity to run into my friend in the elevator and in the parking lot. I am thrilled, though, for my friend's accomplishments and to see the court of appeals gain such an excellent jurist.

Judge Bulla brings to the court of appeals years of experience managing a complex and high-volume case load. When she served as our discovery commissioner, Judge Bulla never left a task undone. She was often there late into the night, and I know she cares deeply about the quality of her work. She also enjoys legal problem-solving and working collaboratively. Another thing I am going to miss are the many occasions that we shared in the past to work out discovery problems, and sometimes other legal problems. She's always been a terrific sounding board for me and, I'm sure, many of the other judges in the Eighth Judicial District Court.

Bonnie is also an excellent writer, a skill she will take with her to the court of appeals. You may not know that, on the side, Bonnie is a published author. She writes science fiction novels for teens.

Bonnie also cares deeply about the larger legal community, which is something I know she will carry with her as she leaves us and goes to, moves on to the court of appeals. She spent countless hours lecturing on issues, including discovery, civility, and professional ethics. She most recently assisted in the herculean efforts to revise the Nevada Rules of Civil Procedure, and I will let the other speakers talk more about those accomplishments.

Socrates said four things belong to a judge: to hear courteously, to answer wisely, to consider soberly, and to decide impartially. And those four things definitely belong to the newest member of our court of appeals, Judge Bonnie Bulla. The loss of the Eighth Judicial District Court is definitely the gain of the court of appeals. Congratulations, Bonnie.

CHIEF JUSTICE GIBBONS:

Thank you very much, Chief Judge Bell. Next I would like to call upon your colleague, also a member of the Eighth Judicial District Court, Judge Tim Williams.

JUDGE WILLIAMS:

Hi. Good afternoon to everyone. And may it please the court, members of our supreme court, court of appeals, my colleagues on the Eighth Judicial District Court, judges of the justice court, and the municipal court, I just want to—and of course, Judge Bulla. I love your picture. I really do. It's a wonderful picture. I just didn't want to forget that, Bonnie. And to Bonnie and your family, it's a pleasure and an honor for me to be here today; it really and truly is.

I remember when Bonnie—first we had the discussions about, you know, applying for a position as a judge for the Court of Appeals for the State of Nevada, and we talked about it quite a bit. And once she was appointed, she graciously asked for me to come and speak at her investiture, and I feel that's a significant honor.

When I was talking to Bonnie about that, and I said, "Bonnie, what do I talk about, you know?" Because understand this, Bonnie and I have known each other for 32 years, which is a long time, and in many respects I think in this legal community we grew up together. Isn't that correct, Bonnie? We did, because 32 years ago, I guess—and I even asked Bonnie, when did we first meet? Because it appears to me—and I look at life this way, I have two lives: I have my pre-Las Vegas life, and then I have my Las Vegas professional life, and Bonnie has been part of my professional life from day one, basically. And so when I was thinking about this I said, "What do I talk about when I talk about my dear friend and colleague, Bonnie Bulla, who in many respects is like my sister in my

professional life?” And that’s how I look at it, Bonnie. I did look at your bio, and there are certain things that I thought about, and number one—I’m going to tell you, this really impressed me, it really did—Bonnie is really smart, she is, and she graduated summa cum laude and as a Phi Beta Kappa from Arizona State University, with a bachelor’s degree in economics. I was impressed, Bonnie, I really was, because I took economics, and I wasn’t—I didn’t fare too well, and you were summa cum laude. Oh my God, I couldn’t believe it—amazing.

Then I thought about this, too, you know, and this is one thing that’s really important, and we can’t overlook the fact that Bonnie, you know, as a member of the legal community here for 30+ years, has held many leadership positions. For example, she was a past president of the Howard McKibben Chapter of the Inns of Court, and that’s a way of giving back and mentoring, which is very important to Bonnie, and we’ll talk about that a little later. And these were things I was thinking, should I talk about, but I’m going to talk about it anyway. So that’s why I’m looking at Bonnie.

She’s the past president of the Southern Nevada Association of Women Attorneys, another leadership position. She’s had many awards, and I guess just recently Bonnie was a recipient in 2018 of the Clark County Law Foundation Liberty Bell Award. Bonnie, and I’m going to talk about those things a little bit because I think everyone should know about that, because I’m very proud of your accomplishments.

One thing Bonnie and I have done from time to time—and we’ve done this together—she’s a lecturer on continuing legal education issues. And I don’t know, Bonnie, isn’t it 20, 25, 30 times you’ve lectured? I know it’s been quite a bit.

One other issue, and I think we can’t overlook what Bonnie has done the last 12 years or so as a discovery commissioner, because as far as I’m concerned, Bonnie has done a lot of the heavy lifting for the district court; she really and truly has. When you look at her case load, and I asked Bonnie about this, I said, “Bonnie, how many cases are we talking about?” And she sheepishly said, “Ah, 20,000 cases or more, you know.” And to put that in perspective, Judge Bulla was responsible for it, not just adjudicating discovery issues, but there is a lot more involved in case management, scheduling issues, and all of those things. And to be quite candid with you, I sometimes wondered how did she accomplish that? And she did, with no problem.

You know, one thing that I think is important—and I don’t want to spend a lot of time on this—but I know Bonnie is really big on the issue of mentoring young lawyers. And I’m going to miss Bonnie, because what we would do over the last 12 years or so, once or twice a week, Bonnie would call me or I would call her, because you have to have a sounding board as a judicial officer—right, Bonnie?—and



we would talk about issues. We would never name lawyers or who the judges were; we would just talk about the legal issues, right, Bonnie?

But this is what I think is very important, and this is where I think Bonnie and I, our careers started off together, and that was working for Neil Galatz. He was a significant role model and mentor in our lives, and I can say that. And what you don't really and truly understand as you go through the process working as a young lawyer at a law firm—and it wasn't a large law firm, five or six lawyers—but anyone who's been here for a long time knows that that firm was heavily involved in very significant and complex civil litigation, and when Bonnie and I were working there, we had to deal with a lot of that—right, Bonnie?—and we did. For example, I know Bonnie worked on the PEPCON explosion litigation cases and was conducting a lot of the percipient witness depositions, which was fairly significant, because I had to do the same task. There were so many witnesses. And do you know what that does? That prepares you when you become a judicial officer, because I can remember—and I know Bonnie remembers this—the first time you walk out for a deposition, it's your deposition, you might have 50 or 100 lawyers sitting there—right, Bonnie?—and you had to be ready.

And one of the, I think, one of the issues that is so important when it comes to mentoring, when you're being mentored, you don't even realize you're being mentored, right? You really don't. This happened to Bonnie; it happened to me. I remember when Neil walked in one day, and he said, "Kid, we're going to go out and take an expert's deposition. I want you to get ready for it." And this is an adverse expert's deposition, right? And you sit back and you say, "Are there any books on this or anyplace I can go?" And, of course, there isn't. But you go, you watch, and you listen. And when it's done, he'll explain to you what you're trying to accomplish. And the reason why I think that's so important when it comes to mentoring, I see it all the time when we have young lawyers come into court, and you sometimes sit back and you say to yourself, "These are pretty smart young kids, but they do have mentors, really and truly."

The reason why I think that is this:—and one of the most important aspects of the mentoring I took away with me, and I'm quite sure Bonnie feels the same way—is you can't lose control of your case—right, Bonnie?—you know, and that's what we were told. And what I mean by that is this: You got to follow the rules, right, Bonnie? You never want to put your case in a position where a judge, a discovery master, an ADR commissioner, or someone who is deciding your ultimate fate; you only want the jury to do that, you know. And those are the types of things that we took with us.

I guess one other issue I can't really overlook—and this is an issue Bonnie and I talked about, and she did tell me she wanted me to address mentoring somewhat—courtroom decorum, right,

Bonnie? That's another issue we would talk about quite a bit. You know, at the end of the day, I guess it's kind of, you have to—it's like you're in the military, you know, you respect the position. And I see sometimes we have young lawyers who just don't get it in this regard. You respect the trial court, right? You respect—whether you agree or disagree, and that's why we have a court of appeals, right, Judge Bulla?

But anyway, all I want to say is this, and I feel very strongly about this, I feel in many respects Bonnie has been my professional sister, that's what she has, and I just want to say this, Judge Bulla, job well done. I look forward to reading your first opinion, right? And just remember this, one piece of advice, when it comes to issues regarding reviewing the discretionary decisions of the trial court, give deference. Thank you.

CHIEF JUSTICE GIBBONS:

Thank you very much, Judge Williams. Our next speaker for Judge Bulla is another trailblazer here in Nevada political history, the first elected female speaker of the Nevada State Assembly, who also has been the Legal Director of the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada for about 30 years now. So I would initially call upon Barbara Buckley.

HONORABLE BARBARA BUCKLEY:

Thank you, Your Honor.

When people think of Bonnie Bulla, they think of many things: an accomplished lawyer, an incredibly hard worker, someone who loves the law, someone who enjoys learning, someone with a scary encyclopedic knowledge of the Rules of Civil Procedure. But what they may not know about is her commitment to public service. It's hard to know exactly where it came from. Maybe it's in her DNA from her late mother Carol, who was so involved in so many philanthropic causes, tirelessly giving of herself; or her father Bob, who is here today, who is an educational leader in Arizona, chairing the Board of Regents for the State of Arizona, serving on nonprofits such as the Urban League, while doing his day job at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, understated, always giving back, and still working with the university today even in retirement. Whether innate, whether learned from these incredible role models, or probably both, Bonnie Bulla's life is also one committed to public service and giving back.

When she first arrived in Las Vegas to become a lawyer, Kathy England dragged her into the Young Lawyers Division of the American Bar Association. In those days, Nevada wasn't big enough to have a seat of our own. We had to share with Utah, if you can imagine that. First, Kathy was the representative; then Bonnie. Bonnie went on to become the editor of *The Affiliate*, the Young

Lawyers Division newsletter, the Clerk of the Assembly, and then the Speaker of the Assembly, a title we share. She served for nearly 10 years.

One of her most vivid memories from those years of service was working on a project in an inner city neighborhood. The Young Lawyer delegates were charged with figuring out how to make a courthouse better for the kids who were waiting for their parents to be finished with their legal matter. This was one of the many moments when it became clear to Bonnie that the role of a lawyer means more than just working on a case. It means having the ability to serve the public better, whether through the creation of legislation promulgated by the Young Lawyers Division, or figuring out how a courthouse could serve children better. This type of experience gets you out of your own world, out of your own silo.

Through her service on the Young Lawyers Division, her thinking crystalized that lawyers are really the gatekeepers of the legal system. The members, the lawyers are the ones that members of the public come into contact with first. She truly began appreciating the role of lawyers and its unique role to help the public with what they needed, whether it was a legal problem and not being able to afford an attorney, whatever was facing someone—usually at a crisis moment in their life.

Bonnie's public service did not end there. After the ABA, Bonnie worked in Amazing Grace, a homeless outreach ministry; she wrote books to encourage teenagers to work through adversity; president of SNAWA, as you heard from Judge Williams, part of the early efforts to support women attorneys to help them support each other, because you could fit all of them in a telephone booth. For you young people, that's where you—no, forget it.

As you also heard, she was involved in the Howard McKibben Inns of Court where she was a pupil in 1988; and then growing up to be the master serving on the executive committee; and then as president; and of course, the winner of the 2018 Clark County Law Foundation Liberty Bell Award, which honors members of the community for their work upholding the rule of law, contributing to good government in a community, stimulating a sense of civic responsibility, and encouraging respect for the rule of law.

Bonnie, as you all know, loves to read, research, and write, serving on the Supreme Court Rules Committee, which sounds like getting a root canal to me. And you heard of all of her work teaching CLEs, hundreds of them, including one just a couple of weeks ago for the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada, free to the lawyers if they took a pro bono case as they walked in the door, because that's in keeping with Bonnie's support of public service.

And, of course, Judge Bulla's commitment to public service infiltrated her career trajectory when she left private practice to work

with the courts on solving problems, collaborating, giving back by becoming a discovery commissioner. She thought she would be good at it, and she was, and the rest is history.

Public service is a critical component to anyone starting a professional career. Serving others benefits a person and helps them grow personally and professionally. We are all part of a bigger picture: a mosaic creates a community. Young people who do not yet know of the joy of public service, whether in their own community or nationally, are missing out on one of the best things that life has to give a person. Joy in life is not just assessed by accumulating money, but on the smile—but the smile on a face of a person whose life you have changed. Bonnie Bulla's commitment to public service embodies this. She demonstrated throughout her career that we are stronger as a community when we help those who are disadvantaged and serve our institutions to make them better. She is kind and positive. She shows us that public service allows you to build bridges with others because that is what public service is all about.

So today is a day of celebration for the first—fourth person ever appointed to the Nevada Court of Appeals. Congratulations, Judge Bulla. We all have no doubt that you will serve the state with integrity and honor, because that is what you have done throughout your professional life. Our state and our community will be enriched by your service, your commitment to the rule of law, your ethics, your integrity, and by all of what you are. Congratulations.

**CHIEF JUSTICE GIBBONS:**

Thank you very much, Barbara, for those words. At this time we will go ahead and proceed with the formal investiture and the administration of the oath. I have asked Associate Chief Justice Kristina Pickering to step down so she can administer the oath of office to Judge Bulla. So Judge Bulla, would you please step forward to the, I think it's to the front of the podium here. Accompanying Judge Bulla will be her father, Robert Bulla, who will be holding the Bible for the administration of the oath. And I will turn it over to Associate Chief Justice Pickering.

**ASSOCIATE CHIEF JUSTICE PICKERING:**

I think there's complete consensus among everyone I've talked to about Judge Bulla joining the court of appeals, and that is that the loss to the Eighth Judicial District Court is the gain for all the Nevada appellate courts, and we're so grateful to have her join us. I speak on behalf of all my colleagues on the appellate court that we are thrilled to have you become a part of the court system. Are you ready to be sworn in?

**JUDGE BULLA:**

I am.

ASSOCIATE CHIEF JUSTICE PICKERING:

Would you raise your right hand, and repeat after me. (*Associate Chief Justice Pickering administered the oath of office to Judge Bulla.*)

CHIEF JUSTICE GIBBONS:

Thank you, Justice Pickering. And next we will proceed with the robing of Judge Bulla. I would ask our Supreme Court Clerk Elizabeth Brown to step down with the robe, and I would ask Michael Phillips, Judge Bulla's husband, together with her brother John Bulla and sister Kristi Bulla, to come forward and assist Judge Bulla with her robing. Okay, thank you very much.

With the robing being completed, let me introduce you to Judge Bonnie A. Bulla. Okay, Judge, we're anxious to hear your words, so please proceed.

JUDGE BULLA:

Chief Justice Gibbons, Justices of the Nevada Supreme Court, my colleagues of the Nevada Court of Appeals, distinguished guests, members of the judiciary and the bar, family and friends, thank you for being part of this today, a day for celebrating and reflecting. I would like to start by extending my appreciation to the Judicial Selection Committee for submitting my name to the Governor as a candidate for his first judicial appointment, Department 3 of the Nevada Court of Appeals. I would also like to thank Governor Sisolak for selecting me. I am grateful and humbled by his confidence in my ability to serve the people of the State of Nevada.

Nevada has been my home for 32 years, since I moved here in 1987, after receiving my law degree from Arizona State University. I am the first member of my family to become a lawyer. I am also the first to live in Nevada. When I look back on it, I realize that moving here, without any family or close friends, was one of the bravest things I've ever done. My father, Bob Bulla, who is here today, has reminded me on occasion that I come from a family of pioneers in search of a better life.

On my father's side, my Quaker relatives left Ireland in the early 1700s for the new world, seeking religious freedom, and our family history has it that they settled in the Colony of Pennsylvania but were eventually thrown out by William Penn for distilling whiskey. I will neither confirm nor deny that particular aspect of my family's folklore.

My great-grandmother Katie, on my mother's side, left her native Poland in a time of turmoil, when she was 17 years old, to seek a new life in America. She came through Ellis Island accompanied by her aunt, leaving behind her parents and siblings. My mother told me many times that she named me after the one song Grandma Katie could sing in English—I know you all know what it is—"My

Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean.” So in retrospect, I guess my leaving Arizona for Nevada wasn’t all that tough. I only moved to a neighboring state.

I started my career at the firm then-known as Vargas & Bartlett, where I first met Kathy England. Kathy knows a lot of people, so I made many, many, many, many friends in my new state. Thank you, Kathy, for helping me with the planning of today’s investiture and for taking me to my first Young Lawyers Division meeting. It did open doors for me, and it gave me an appreciation for the value of public service.

I also met a few friends on my own, like Larry Springberg. We first met in bar review class. He was wearing his U of A T-shirt, and I was wearing my ASU one. Despite that, we’ve been friends ever since. Thank you, Larry, and your family for leading us in the Pledge of Allegiance. It is a reminder that no matter where we came from, we are all part of one nation.

The invocation given by my dear friend Yogi reminds us that it is a blessing to be able to call Nevada home; and that God, in His infinite wisdom and mercy, sees us through in both good times and bad.

I stand here today because of the love and support and mentorship of others. My grandmother Polly Bulla was a legal secretary in the 1930s, before marrying my grandfather Johnny Bulla. He was a PGA touring pro for many years and came in second in the 1939 British Open at St. Andrews, on the day my father was born. And Dad, I realized I just told your age. Sorry about that. Those were turbulent times, and he barely got out of Europe and back to his family before World War II broke out.

Grandma Bulla spent many hours correcting my homework and making me redo it until she was satisfied that I understood. Let me tell you, I gained a lot of understanding. I distinctly remember my grandmother telling—or telling my grandmother that I was going to be a legal secretary, just like her when I grew up. And she shook her head and said, “No, you’re going to be a lawyer.” And I realize now that was not an opportunity that was available to her at the time, but she believed in me and saw something in myself that I couldn’t see, and so I am grateful that she was able to see me graduate from law school and pass the Nevada Bar.

I’m also fortunate that my parents valued education. They were each first in their immediate families to obtain college degrees from ASU. My sister is also an ASU graduate, but my brother John has his degree from Northern Arizona University. There is always a rebel in every family. Later, my father served as president of the Arizona Board of Regents and earned an honorary doctoral degree from NAU. Okay, so maybe we have two rebels.

The last 15 years since my mother Carol has passed has been difficult for our family. We have faced many challenges together.

Dad, I know it hasn't been easy having to be both father and mother. You've done a wonderful job. Thank you for the many counseling sessions and guidance through the tough times, including just last week. To my sister Kristi and brother John, we are bound by our love for one another. Remember, Nevada is right next door to Arizona; we are never far apart.

In addition to the love and support of my family, I also did not get to this special day without my husband Michael Phillips by my side. Thank you, Honey, for agreeing to spend our wedding anniversary in snowy Carson City so I could interview with the Governor for this position.

MR. PHILLIPS:

You're welcome.

JUDGE BULLA:

And for your confidence in my future, albeit after watching reruns of *The West Wing*. But the truth is you know me, and you know I'm determined, and that I don't give up, even when the journey is difficult.

When I reflect on how much this opportunity means to me, I realize it would not have been possible without the confidence placed in me and the guidance given to me by a few very special mentors, so it is with great fondness that I remember the late Judge Allan Earl and attorney Neil Galatz. They were brilliant, tough attorneys, and they were committed teachers of the law. I will be forever grateful to them for both the time they spent in helping a young lawyer learn her craft and for all of their support over the years. I'm also grateful to Judge Tim Williams, my friend and sounding board. Thank you for telling part of our story. And thank you, Justice Michael Douglas, for not only your invaluable insights, but for always taking my phone calls during my Inns of Court presidency and not putting me directly through to the voicemail. Thank you, especially, for reminding me to solve one piece of the puzzle at a time. I would also like to recognize Justice Miriam Shearing, as you heard, the first woman of the Nevada Supreme Court. She blazed the trail for me and for so many others. Justice Shearing, I look up to you, and it means so much to me that you're here. Mentors are not always older than we are. Thank you, Chief Judge Linda Bell, for your insights and encouragement during my time as discovery commissioner. I especially appreciate the wisdom of your observation that one will not be considered for a seat on the Nevada Court of Appeals unless one first submits an application for the job.

I also want to take a moment to thank my former staff in Discovery, Mito Sahagun, Natilie Simonetti, Francesca Haak, and my law clerk, Anna Blankenship. I am grateful to each of you for the support you have given me over the years and during my transition onto the court of appeals. Thank you for being part of my journey.

I look around and I see so many friends, my skiing and golfing buddies from the Las Vegas Ski Club, my Bible study group, friends from Amazing Grace Ministry, friends in the Nevada Bar who I've practiced with and against over the years, friends from law school. To my ABA Young Lawyers Division friends who are here today, Judge Margaret Masunaga from Hawaii, Heidi Staudenmaier from Snell & Wilmer in Arizona, and Ilene Korey from Clausen & Miller in Chicago, thank you for taking the time from your busy lives to share this special day with me. We will always be friends, and young lawyers at heart.

We live imperfect lives, but with our imperfections comes our humanity. There are always ups and downs. It's through our own struggles that we come to better understand the struggles of others. No one understands this better than the Honorable Barbara Buckley, who has spent her career fighting for those without a voice. Barbara, I hope you know how much it means to me that you spoke on my behalf. You gave a voice to the words in my heart. Your organization, the Legal Aid Center of Nevada, together with Nevada Legal Services Corporation, the Elder Law Project, and other public interest organizations in and around our state, offer much needed help and hope to those in our community whose problems would otherwise be ignored. You all are the true heroes of our legal community. I encourage each member of the bar to take on a pro bono case and make a difference in the life of someone truly in need of your help and your skill.

And if you've missed seeing me in Discovery, here's your opportunity to come and say hello. The court of appeals hears oral argument on qualified pro bono cases that come before us. You may have to answer tough questions during oral argument, but this time I won't be the only one asking them.

Chief Judge Michael Gibbons and Judge Jerry Tao, I look forward to working with you both and continuing to build a strong court of appeals that all Nevadans can be proud of. I know I have big shoes to fill in Department 3. Of course, I'm only speaking figuratively, Justice Silver. I also want to acknowledge the new clerk of our court, Kurt Jensen, who also has big shoes to fill with the sudden and tragic passing of our former clerk Tom Harris. Kurt, you're going to do great.

As I reflect on my journey, I look forward with excitement to the future. I am grateful for my staff at the court of appeals, Cassandra Ramey, my Judicial Chambers Administrator, also a Nevada lawyer; and Justin Pasquale, my law clerk and one of the newest members of the bar. Way to go, Justin! Thank you both for your hard work. And to paraphrase one of my favorite lines from the movie *The Martian*: We are not going to die on Mars.

But seriously, I appreciate all of the kind words and encouragement I have received from hundreds of well-wishers, from both



Northern and Southern Nevada, who have expressed their support for me now and in the future. And finally, my sincere thanks to the staff of the Nevada Supreme Court and Court of Appeals and the Administrative Office of the Court for helping out with my investiture and making today so memorable for me, my family, and friends. Thank you all for coming. Now it's time to celebrate.

CHIEF JUSTICE GIBBONS:

Thank you, Judge. Now don't get too comfortable in that seat. I would like you to please come forward and join your colleagues on the bench. Please sit next to Judge Tao. And ladies and gentlemen, you can see now the Nevada Supreme Court and the Nevada Court of Appeals in their full complement.

Okay, ladies and gentlemen, in conclusion for today's proceedings, again thank you for being here. I noticed that the president of the State Bar of Nevada, Richard Parker, is here. Richard, I'm sorry if you were here before; I missed seeing you, but thank you for coming on behalf of the State Bar as well.

Also, to echo what Judge Bulla said, our staff did work very hard with Judge Bulla to prepare for today's investiture. Among the people that assisted Judge Bulla is our Supreme Court Clerk, Elizabeth Brown, who is sitting in front here; Kurt Jensen, who is the Chief Clerk for the Nevada Court of Appeals; also, from the Administrative Office of the Courts, we have our Director Robin Sweet; our Assistant Director John McCormick—they are both hiding out in the back of the room back there—plus many, many others of our court staffers sitting in the back as well that have assisted us. So thank all of you for doing so.

On behalf of Judge Bulla, Judge Bulla would like to invite all of you to join her family and friends for a reception at the Cafe Now, which is located on this floor of the Las Vegas City Council Chambers. As you exit, please turn to your left to get to the Cafe Now. And this will conclude today's proceedings.

CLERK OF THE COURT:

All rise. The special session of the Supreme Court of the State of Nevada is now adjourned.

