

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Honorable William C. Carpenter Jr. receives First State Distinguished Service Award from Delaware State Bar Association

The Delaware State Bar Association this week presented Superior Court Judge William C. Carpenter Jr. with its highest honor, the First State Distinguished Service Award.

The award was presented at a lunchtime ceremony by Superior Court President Judge Jan. R. Jurden on June 23, 2021 at the DSBA offices in Wilmington. Judge Carpenter, who is currently the longest-serving judge on Superior Court, first joined the bench in 1993 after 8 years as a federal prosecutor followed by 8 years as the U.S. Attorney for Delaware under three different presidents, both Democratic and Republican.

President Judge Jurden described Carpenter as “a proud, true-blue Delaware native, born and raised in Milton, proud University of Delaware alumnus, …outstanding jurist, model citizen, exemplary mentor, cherished colleague and wanna-be scratch golfer,” who has “rendered selfless and distinguished service to the Bench and Bar, the State of Delaware and our Country for decades.”

The award, which was established in 1979, is designed to recognize members of the Delaware Bar who have brought honor to the legal profession and the Bar through their “good citizenship in civic and humanitarian service” over many years and who have advanced “the ideals of citizen participation and community accomplishment.” Previous recipients have included The Hon. Collins J. Seitz Sr. (the father of the current Chief Justice), pioneering civil rights attorney Louis L. Redding and four former Delaware Supreme Court Chief Justices.

“Judge Carpenter exemplifies the leadership and dedication to service that is honored by the First State Distinguished Service Award,” said DSBA President Kathleen M. Miller. “He joins an elite group of Delaware attorneys and judges on whom this honor has been bestowed and it is well-deserved.”

In her remarks, President Judge Jurden said Judge Carpenter “is the go-to person whenever something important has to get done. Period. Hard stop.” Most recently, she noted, he was the one she and the Delaware Courts turned to during the COVID-19 pandemic to figure out how to keep justice system operating while protecting all involved against the virus. “We had to throw out the old playbook and come up with all new processes, and do it fast,” she said, adding Carpenter “did what he always has done. . . . He thoughtfully assessed the problems, and then calmly, expertly solved them one by one, in record time.”

Jurden concluded that Judge Carpenter’s remarkable track record of “getting the job done over decades of doing the work for the citizens of Delaware has made him not only one of the most consequential judges of our time, but one of the most consequential legal professionals our State has ever known.”

Carpenter is now serving in his third 12-year term as a Superior Court Judge, having been re-nominated by Gov. John Carney in 2017.