



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ASIAN AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK CONGRATULATES JUDGE MEREDITH VACCA ON HER HISTORIC APPOINTMENT AS FIRST WOMAN OF COLOR AND FIRST ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER JUDGE TO SERVE IN UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR WESTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

NEW YORK – August 6, 2024. The Asian American Bar Association of New York (“AABANY”) congratulates Meredith Vacca on her historic appointment as the first Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) and woman of color judge to serve in the United States District Court for Western District of New York, expanding AAPI representation among judges in New York’s Federal courts.

Judge Vacca, 43, is a Rochester-area native, former prosecutor, and Acting State Supreme Court judge and has been a lifelong public servant. Judge Vacca has served in the Greater Rochester area for the better part of two decades, beginning in 2007 to her current role as Acting New York State Supreme Court Justice.

Judge Vacca has forged a distinguished legal career. After a short period in private practice, Judge Vacca spent thirteen years handling criminal cases and working within the Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Bureau as the Monroe County Assistant District Attorney. She handled thousands of cases involving violent and abuse crimes, household crimes, and crimes against children. Ms. Vacca took on difficult cases with a focus on bringing families and children justice and healing.

In 2020, Judge Vacca was elected to the Monroe County Court and has served as an Acting New York State Supreme Court Justice since January 2023. She dealt with complex civil matters and challenging criminal cases, including those involving felony jury and bench trials, homicide, burglary, and felony drug and gun cases.

In addition, Judge Vacca is a proud mother, and her time at the Monroe County DA’s office has given her a deep passion for working with at-risk children to help them succeed and fulfill their potential. A frequent volunteer speaker for students in the Greater Rochester Area, Judge Vacca also collaborated with a City of Rochester school to create an internship program that provides vulnerable young students with courtroom internships under her guidance.

Judge Vacca will bring to the Federal bench her perspective shaped by depth of experience, as well as her unique upbringing. Judge Vacca was born to Korean parents and raised as an adoptee

by two Rochester natives in Greece, New York. She graduated from the University at Buffalo School of Law and is currently the lone AAPI judge serving the 7th Judicial District. A lifetime of unique challenges and great accomplishments has given Judge Vacca a deep appreciation for the hardships and opportunities that come with a diverse background and upbringing.

After recommending her to serve, and her confirmation, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer stated, “Meredith Vacca will bring talent, experience and respect for the law to the Western District of New York court.”

As recently as 2013, the Western District of New York bench had no women serving on it. AABANY applauds Judge Vacca’s role in enhancing the AAPI representation among New York’s courts.

“Judge Vacca’s near-two decades of experience as well as her commitment, community service, drive, and legal expertise make her an excellent and highly qualified candidate for the Federal bench,” President Joseph Eng, Jr. states. “AABANY congratulates Judge Vacca for her historic appointment to the United States District Court in the Western District of New York and applauds her commitment to serving the community and for being a trailblazer for future generations of AAPI lawyers and judges who aspire to follow in her path.”

For more information, please contact Yang Chen, AABANY Executive Director, at (646) 653-2168, or direct any inquiries to main@aabany.org.

The Asian American Bar Association of New York is a not-for-profit 501(c)(6) professional membership organization of attorneys concerned with issues affecting the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. Incorporated in 1989, AABANY seeks not only to encourage the professional growth of its members but also to advocate for the AAPI community as a whole. AABANY is a New York regional affiliate of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA).

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