

The Honorable Katie Kennedy

Former District Judge

Katie Kennedy received her B. A. Summa Cum Laude from Rhodes College in 1981 and her J. D. from Vanderbilt University School of Law in 1984. While at Vanderbilt, she served as an Associate Editor of the Vanderbilt Law Review. After graduation from law school, Judge Kennedy served as a Law Clerk for Senior United States Circuit Judge Bailey Brown on the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.

She joined the law firm of Bracewell, LLP in 1985 and practiced commercial litigation until she was elected to the bench of the 164th District Court in 1992. She was reelected in 1996. Judge Kennedy resigned from the bench in December 1999.

Since resigning from the bench, Judge Kennedy served from 2000-2016 as an Assigned Judge in the courts of the State of Texas sitting in Harris and surrounding counties. She has also mediated and arbitrated thousands of disputes involving all areas of civil law. She has served as a Court Appointed Special Master in numerous cases.

In the 2010 Judicial Candidate Qualification Poll, Judge Kennedy received more Well Qualified ratings than any District Judge candidate, whether Democrat or Republican, incumbent or challenger.

In the 2005 Houston Bar Association Judicial Evaluation Poll, which rates Federal, State, Municipal, and Visiting Trial Judges, Judge Kennedy received an Outstanding Rating of 73.7%, one of the highest ratings of the entire poll. While she was on the bench, Judge Kennedy was consistently one of the highest rated judges in the Houston Bar Association's Judicial Qualification and Evaluation polls. In the Houston Bar Association's 1999 Judicial Evaluation Poll, she received the highest rating of any state district judge. In 1998, she was one of three judges statewide appointed by the Texas Supreme Court as a member of the Judicial Campaign Finance Study Committee.

The Texas Association of Civil Trial and Appellate Specialists selected Judge Kennedy as the 1999 Trial Judge of the Year. The Houston Chronicle and Texas Executive Women honored her as a 1999 Woman on the Move.

In 2016, she was appointed to the Texas Ethics Commission where she currently serves as Vice Chair. The TEC provides guidance on various ethics laws and oversees regulatory filings by candidates, officeholders, lobbyists, and PACs. In 2007 she was appointed to the Texas Access to Justice Commission, and she served as a Commissioner from 2007-2013. She served as Chair of the Commission's Awards Committee. The Commission was created by the Texas Supreme Court and oversees the agencies that provide civil legal services for indigent Texans.

She is a member of the Texas Bar Foundation, Houston Bar Foundation, and Houston Bar Association. She served as President of the Houston Lawyer Referral Service. She previously served on the Board of the Harris County

Dispute Resolution Center. She performs numerous pro bono mediations and arbitrations for the Dispute Resolution Center.

She is admitted to practice in the Texas and Georgia state courts; the United States Supreme Court, the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth, Sixth, and Tenth Circuits; and the United States District Court for the Southern and Western Districts of Texas.

Judge Kennedy is married to the Rev. Andrew B. Noel, who is a pastor at Chapelwood United Methodist Church. She is the proud mother of Rebecca Noel, who attends Rice University. She is also the proud stepmother of Katherine Noel Wells, who is a graduate of the University of Mississippi and licensed realtor.