

Lena Levario

Retired Senior Judge, Mediator and Arbitrator

Professional Biography and Resume

Lena Levario is a retired Texas district court judge. She has been licensed to practice law for over 34 years. Throughout her legal career, she has handled hundreds of complex legal matters as a lawyer in private practice and as a Texas district court judge. Since her retirement as a presiding judge in 2014, she has mediated many family and civil law cases. She has received two awards recognizing her commitment to alternative dispute resolution: The 2017 Dallas County Alternative Dispute Resolution Center Trailblazer Award and the 2016 Dallas County Alternative Dispute Resolution Center Volunteer of the Year.

TRAININGS AND CERTIFICATIONS

Manouso Mediation and Arbitration, LLC: Conflict Resolution Coaching & Training, Arbitration Training, 9 hours, 2021

Texas Association of Mediators Conference, 2021

Advanced Personal Injury Law Course, 2020 Texas Bar CLE

Family Justice Conference, 2021 Texas Center for the Judiciary

Dallas Bar Association Family Law Section Bench Bar Conference 2021

Advanced Family Law Conference, 2020 Texas Bar CLE

Advanced Mediation: Marital Disputes, 2015 Abilene Christian University, Duncum Center for Conflict Resolution

Child Protective Services Mediation Course, 2016 University of Texas Arlington

Basic 40-Hour Mediation Training Course, 2015 Professional Services & Education, Dr. Nancy K. Ferrell

PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE, ORGANIZATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

Texas State Bar, Admitted to the practice of law in 1986, Texas Bar No. 12244950

United States District Court, Northern District of Texas, Admitted 1987

Texas Association of Mediators, Member

Dallas Bar Association, Member of Alternative Dispute Resolution Section and Family Law Section

Dallas Hispanic Bar Association, Fellow

Mexican American Bar Association, Member

EXPERIENCE

Visiting Judge

January 1, 2015 to January 2, 2018 and December 11, 2019 to present

Granted Senior Judge status by the Texas Supreme Court. Visiting judge by assignment.

Mediator

July 15, 2015 to January 2, 2018 and October 15, 2019 to present

Mediator in family and civil cases, helping parties resolve legal disputes in order to obtain equitable outcomes without the need for court intervention.

Domestic Violence and Family Law Team Manager

January 3, 2018 to October 4, 2019

Supervised and trained attorneys who represented survivors of sexual assault in family and civil courts in 114 Northwest Texas counties. Also served as the Dallas office branch manager.

Presiding Judge, 204th Judicial District Court

1993-1995 and 2007-2014.

First appointed to this bench in 1993 by then Governor Ann Richards. Became the first Latina Judge in the history of Dallas County. Presided over hundreds of hearings and trials, established court processes, managed large dockets, worked with the elected District Clerk, elected County Commissioners, the Sheriff of Dallas County and Parkland Hospital System to help ensure swift and fair administration of justice. Implemented progressive policies which had a positive impact on the lives of the defendants and in the community.

Law Offices of Lena Levario

1995 – 2006

Practiced in the areas of family, civil, criminal, juvenile, and CPS law.

Assistant Public Defender for Dallas County, Texas

1988-1993

Represented indigent defendants in criminal courts.

OTHER COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Legal Advisor, National Board of LULAC

September 2018 to January 31, 2020

Appointed by the National President and approved by the Board of Directors as legal advisor for the League of United Latin American Citizens. It is the largest and oldest Hispanic civil rights organization in the country. Responsible for ensuring board and membership compliance with this non-profit's Constitution and Bylaws, active participant at all National Board meetings and executive board meetings, rendered legal opinions for members throughout the U.S and for LULAC's 401(c)(3) and 401(c)(4) national boards.

Independent Investigator, City of Dallas Fake Drug Scandal, 2004

Hired by the City of Dallas along with attorney, Terry Hart, to investigate allegations of possible police corruption. Worked with and supervised staff of 7 Dallas police officers assigned to assist the panel. Responsible for all aspects of the investigation including determination of the protocol to be used, scope and substance. Arranged for education of panel on all relevant topics, including city policies and procedures, forensic accounting, and undercover drug procedures. Conducted interviews of witnesses, reviewed documents, met and worked closely with the Dallas County

District Attorney Special Prosecutor and his investigators. Resolved serious and complex legal issues. Responsible for media contacts and Freedom of Information requests.

Produced a well-received report. Referred cases involving police officers for administrative violations and for criminal prosecution. Several officers were indicted. The report made several recommendations for changes in policy and procedures and all but one of the recommendations was adopted by the police department.

COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIPS AND ORGANIZATIONS – most recent

City of Dallas Welcoming Communities and Immigrant Affairs Taskforce, Member

Dallas Area Rape Crisis Center, Board Member,

Texas Sexual Violence Task Force, Member

Texas Latina Coalition, Member

LULAC, League of United Latin American Citizens 2002-present Served in a variety of capacities, including President of Council 4782 for 4 years, Of Counsel to the National President, 2002-2006, Member of Texas LULAC Civil Rights Commission, Provided legal advice and guidance to LULAC National President and board members, including advice on national policy. Conducted yearly resolutions committee meetings with over 800 voting members and close to 100 resolutions involving difficult and highly emotional issues. Negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding with the Dallas Police Department and the Latino Peace Officers' Association, which resulted from allegations of discrimination in hiring, retention and promotion of Hispanic police officers.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

2017 Dallas County Alternative Dispute Resolution Center Trailblazer Award

2016 Dallas County Alternative Dispute Resolution Center Volunteer of the Year

2014 La Luz award recipient from the Dallas Hispanic Bar Association, awarded to attorneys who have contributed by "lighting the path to the legal profession" in the Hispanic community.

2014 Fellow, Dallas Hispanic Bar Association

MEDIA

"Lena Levario: It's time to address unequal justice," Opinion published in the Dallas Morning News, October 2016.

"Texas Women: Their Histories, Their Lives," book published in 2015 includes a chapter titled "Latinas in Dallas, 1910-2010." Lena Levario is mentioned along with other women who pushed cultural barriers to achieve prominence in politics.

"The Law & Lena Levario" by Rod Davis, article published in D Magazine, September 1993; winner of Katy Award. This article is listed by the University of Texas at Austin's Center for American History in the Mexican American History Resources Bibliography under "Politics, Suffrage, and Civil Rights."

"Chicanas in Charge: Gender and Leadership in the 21st Century," by Dr. Jose Angel Gutierrez, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 2006.

"The Women Behind MegaMarch," interviewed by Stephanie Lucero, aired on CBS Channel 11, April 2006.

Fox 4 News Report "Follow-up Report: Fake Drug Scandal," Reporter Rebecca Aguilar, aired on

evening news March 6 and March 7, 2006.
Various media reports on the STAR Court program 2008 - 2014
ABC report on the problems with the court-appointed attorney system.
Occasional expert commentator on Univision Evening News.

EDUCATION

Texas Tech University School of Law, J.D., 1986

Texas Tech University, B.A. Sociology, 1983