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Anchorage



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Gov. Walker appoints Herman Walker as Anchorage Superior Court judge

Jerzy Shedlock | July 25, 2015

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Alaska Gov. Bill Walker [announced Friday](#) his appointment of the second ever -- and only current -- African-American Superior Court judge in the state.

Herman Walker Jr. was appointed to the Anchorage Superior Court and will replace judge [Philip Volland](#), who is retiring at the end of August.

"It is an honor to put forward Herman Walker's name as Anchorage's newest Superior Court judge," Walker said in a prepared statement. "Anchorage is a community that is economically, socially and ethnically diverse, so it seems only fitting to have a judge whose work experience underscores that same sense of diversity."

Anchorage's Mountain View neighborhood has been dubbed the [most diverse census tract](#) in the U.S., and the city's public schools [lead the nation in diversity](#).

Herman Walker has lived in Alaska for 23 years and practiced law for 22, according to the governor's office. For the past 15 years, he worked as a partner at Limón & Walker, where his clients included injured plaintiffs, criminal defendants and corporations.

The incoming judge has also worked for the state's Office of Public Advocacy and Public Defender Agency. He is credited as one of the founding members of the Alaska Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers.

Outside practicing law, Herman Walker was the former owner of The Body Shop franchise in Anchorage, according to the governor's office.

He received his education at Arizona State University and the University of Wyoming College of Law.

"After reading the recommendations submitted by his colleagues, it is clear that Herman is highly respected and has a genuine interest in the well-being of others," Gov. Walker said. "This combination of skill and empathy will make him an outstanding judge and an asset to the Anchorage community."

Larry Card was the first African American superior court judge in Alaska, appointed by Gov. Wally Hickel and serving from 1993 to 2005, said Gov. Walker's press secretary Katie Marquette.

Come September, Herman Walker will be one of 42 superior court judges statewide.

The state has relatively few minority attorneys, however. According to a 2013 [Alaska Judicial Council report](#), the latest data available, 94 percent of Alaska Bar members who responded to a survey identified as Caucasians, about the same percentage as six years earlier.

"Just more than 2 percent of bar members were Alaska Native/American Indian. Hispanics and Asian/Pacific Islanders each comprised a little more than 1 percent of the bar membership, and Blacks were less than 1 percent," the report says.



"The Alaska Supreme Court recognizes the importance of increasing the diversity of Alaska's bench," said Mara Rabinowitz, communications counsel for the Alaska Court System. "The Fairness, Diversity, and Equality Committee, chaired by Justice Dana Fabe, has worked for many years to increase diversity within the Bar and on the bench through programs such as Color of Justice and Mentor Jet, where

diverse students are introduced to law by judges and attorneys.”

Kotzebue Superior Court Judge Paul Roetman is Hispanic. Recently retired presiding judge of the state’s third judicial district, Sen Tan, identified as Asian American.

And on the Anchorage District Court there are Judge Pamela Washington and Judge Jo-Ann Chung. Judge Washington is the state’s first African American female judge and Jo-Ann Chung is the first Asian American female judge.

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I know Walker. I don't support the appointment.

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Richard Rhyner
Let's hope Walker appointed Walker because he was the most qualified , not picked because of the color of his skin. No man or woman who is less qualified should be picked for any job. In this day and age we are supposed to be color blind. Everyone has an equal opportunity for any job. Picking based on color is wrong now , just as it was a hundred years ago.

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