



# MICHIGAN COURTS NEWS RELEASE

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## **Chief Justice Young: Justice Joan Larsen is “perfect fit” for Court and its “commitment to the rule of law and legal scholarship”**

LANSING, MI, September 30, 2015 – Michigan Supreme Court Chief Justice Robert P. Young, Jr. today said that Governor Snyder’s appointment of Joan L. Larsen was “a perfect fit with a Court that is second to none in its commitment to the rule of law and legal scholarship.” Larsen is currently special counsel and adjunct professor at the University of Michigan Law School.

The new justice is a former deputy assistant Attorney General at the U.S. Justice Department and law clerk for both U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonin Scalia and U.S. Court of Appeals D.C. Circuit Judge David B. Sentelle. For more than a decade, she has taught at the University of Michigan where she won the L. Hart Wright Award for excellence in teaching.

“Joan Larsen is an accomplished, nationally recognized legal scholar, successful teacher, and keen legal thinker,” Young continued. “My colleagues and I welcome her to a collegial Court that is ready to work with her in building on our successful record of making Michigan’s judiciary a model for the nation.”

“I have practiced law, taught the law, and enforced the law,” said Justice Larsen. “Public service has always been my calling. I look forward to serving the people of Michigan by faithfully interpreting the constitution and laws of our great state.”

The new justice graduated first in her class from Northwestern University School of Law where she won numerous awards for legal scholarship. Justice Larsen is also an experienced lawyer who served in the Washington, D.C. office of Sidley & Austin.

Justice Larsen joins a Court that has focused on implementing grass roots reforms to improve the efficiency of Michigan courts and maintain the highest level of service to the public. These reforms include:

- Performance measures that help trial courts set benchmarks and improve outcomes. For example, participants in mental health and sobriety courts are three times less likely to reoffend, avoiding costly incarceration and making communities safer.
- Implementing technology such as videoconferencing which is now deployed in more than 400 courtrooms, saving taxpayers nearly \$6 million over the past two years.
- Re-engineering court processes and rightsizing the judiciary by trimming 26 judgeships, saving more than \$8.2 million since 2011.

Justice Larsen succeeds former Justice Mary Beth Kelly and will have to stand for election in November of 2016 to fulfill the remainder of Kelly’s term, which runs through the end of 2018.

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