

Court Information Release



Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division
219 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois 60604

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Court Welcomes District Judge Franklin U. Valderrama in Ceremonial Investiture

Chicago, Ill. – On April 8, 2022, U.S. District Judge Franklin U. Valderrama was sworn in as a district judge at a ceremonial investiture.

“Judge Valderrama is a wonderful addition to the district court bench. Judge Valderrama brings extensive judicial experience that will benefit the Northern District of Illinois,” said Chief Judge Rebecca R. Pallmeyer.

Ariana and Maya Valderrama, Judge Valderrama’s daughters, read the Commission and made the motion to administer the Oath of Office, and Chief Judge Pallmeyer administered the Oath.

U.S. District Judge Manish Shah shared a history of the judicial seat to which Judge Valderrama was nominated. Senators Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth offered video remarks. Chief Judge Timothy C. Evans, Circuit Court of Cook County, and Judge Edward N. Robles, Circuit Court of Cook County, Chancery Department, gave remarks.

Judge Valderrama previously served as a Chancellor, a judge in the Chancery Division of the Circuit Court of Cook County. Prior to joining the bench in 2007, Judge Valderrama was a partner at Sanchez, Daniels & Hoffman LLP, where his practice focused on civil litigation. Judge Valderrama has also served as an adjunct professor at UIC Law school. Judge Valderrama earned his undergraduate from the University of Illinois at Chicago and his law degree from the DePaul University College of Law.

On February 5, 2020, the President announced his intent to nominate Judge Valderrama to serve as a United States District Judge, and on February 12, 2020, his nomination was sent to the Senate. He was confirmed on September 17, 2020. Judge Valderrama received his

commission on September 23, 2020. Judge Valderrama fills the seat vacated by former Judge Rubén Castillo, who retired from the Court on September 27, 2019.

Judge Valderrama is the first Panamanian American to serve as an Article III judge. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, his investiture was the first ceremonial investiture in the district since February 2020.

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Photos by Jim Slonoff.

Above: Chief Judge Pallmeyer administers the Oath of Office to Judge Valderrama. Judge Valderrama offers remarks after being sworn in.