

Press Release

The Federal Court Family Celebrates Black History Month with *The Storied History of Indiana's Black Lawyers and Judges*

Friday, February 9, 2024, at 2:00 PM

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana is pleased to announce its 25th annual Black History Month event. This year's hour-long program, *The Storied History of Indiana's Black Lawyers and Judges*, will be held in **courtroom 202 at the Birch Bayh Federal Building and United States Courthouse on Friday, February 9, 2024, at 2:00 PM**. A virtual option will also be available for those who cannot attend in person.

The program will feature a joint presentation by Chief Judge Tanya Walton Pratt and distinguished attorney Richard D. Hailey. Together, they will look back on the rich legacy of Black lawyers in Indiana, from John R. Byrd and James T.V. Hill's struggles to be admitted to the bar in the 1870s and 1880s, to the Honorable Doris L. Pryor's appointment to the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit in 2022. Chief Judge Pratt and Mr. Hailey will explore the stories, struggles, and triumphs of these trailblazers and the many other Black lawyers and judges who have shaped Indiana's history.

The Honorable Tanya Walton Pratt became Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Indiana on March 20, 2021. She is the first person of color to serve as the Southern District of Indiana's chief judge, and the tenth chief judge in the court's history. Chief Judge Pratt was appointed as a district judge on June 15, 2010, becoming the first African American federal judge in Indiana history. She filled the vacancy created by the elevation of Judge David F. Hamilton to the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit.

Richard D. Hailey is a partner at Ramey & Hailey. Mr. Hailey possesses more than 35 years of legal experience and currently handles a wide variety of complex personal injury cases. Mr. Hailey is a former president of the American Association for Justice (formerly the Association of Trial Lawyers of America) and has given presentations on legal issues to law schools and professional organizations throughout the United States. He has appeared on national media outlets and regularly testifies in front of state and federal hearings on the merits of various proposed legislation.

As in past years, the 2024 program is co-sponsored by the United States District Court, Bankruptcy Court, Probation Office, United States Attorney's Office, Federal Community Defenders, and the United States Marshals Service for the Southern District of Indiana.

One hour of Continuing Legal Education credit has been approved.

The event is free and open to the public, but pre-registration is required. Please email insd_cle@insd.uscourts.gov to reserve a space and indicate whether you will attend in person or virtually. Virtual attendees will receive a Zoom link from the court the week of the event.