

THE HONORABLE BRENDA F. HARBIN-FORTE (Ret.)

Judge of the Alameda County (California) Superior Court (7/98 - 11/19)

Judge of the Oakland-Piedmont-Emeryville (California) Municipal Court (1/92 - 7/98)

Admitted to California Bar in November 1979

PRE-JUDICIAL EMPLOYMENT:

- **Thelen, Marrin, Johnson & Bridges**, Oakland, CA & San Francisco, CA (Partner, 1990-1992; Associate, 1984-1989): General and complex civil litigation in state and federal courts.
- **Harris, Alexander & Burris [& Culver]**, Oakland, CA (Associate, 1982-1984): General civil litigation and criminal defense in state and federal courts.
- **Moore & Bell**, Oakland, CA (Law Clerk, 1978-1979) General civil litigation and criminal defense in state and federal courts
- **Legal Aid Society of Alameda County**, Oakland, CA (Law Clerk, 1977-1978)

CLERKSHIP:

- **U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit**, San Francisco, CA
(Court Law Clerk, 1979-1982; Assistant Calendar Attorney, 1980-1982; Special Assignment to the Chambers of Judge Dorothy W. Nelson Summer 1981 and Summer 1982)

EDUCATION:

- **Berkeley Law School/Boalt Hall School of Law, University of California**, Berkeley, CA (J.D., 5/79): Class ('79) President (elected office); Co-Director, Appellate Advocacy; Moot Court Board; Vice-Chair, ASUC Judicial Committee
- **University of California**, Berkeley, CA (B.A. in Rhetoric, 6/76): Member, Honor Students Society; Graduation Speaker at Departmental Graduation Ceremonies

APPOINTMENTS:

- City of Oakland Administrator, Screening Panel for 2020 Redistricting Commission (2020 - Present)
- State Bar of California, Council on Access & Fairness, Chair (2007-2008; 2019-Present); Chair of Judicial Committee (2007-2011; 2017-2018); Member (2007- 2011; 2016-Present)
- Judicial Council of California's Science and the Law Steering Committee, (2005-2008)
- State Bar of California's [Diversity] Pipeline Task Force, Chair, Courts Working Group (2005-2007)
- Judicial Council of California (1996-1999; Chair, Rules & Projects Committee, 1998-1999)
- Planning Committee, CJER Continuing Judicial Studies Programs (1995-1998)
- U.S. District Court - Northern District Civil Justice Reform Act Committee (1991-1992)
- Alameda County Superior Court Settlement Commissioner (1990-1992)
- State Bar Litigation Section, Executive Committee (1990-1991)
- Alameda County Trial Court Delay Reduction Act, Local Rules and Oversight Committees (1987-1990)
- U.S. District Court Merit Selection Panel (for retention of a magistrate judge) (1986)
- Oakland Residential Rent Arbitration Board (1986-1989)
- Alameda County Fish & Game Advisory Commission (1986-1987)
- State Bar Committee on Administration of Justice (1984-1987)

PUBLICATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS:

- Consultant, Judicial Council Committee on Providing Access and Fairness "Judicial Diversity Tool Kit" (2011 and 2019)
- Consultant, California Judges Benchguide: "Adoptions" (CJER, 2005 - 2009)
- Consultant, California Judges Benchguide: "Preliminary Hearings" (CJER, 1999 - 2009)
- Consultant, California Judges Benchguide: "Landlord-Tenant Litigation" (CJER, 1998 - 2009)
- Consultant, California Judges Benchbook: Civil Proceedings - Before Trial (CJER, 1995 - 2016)

- Consultant, California Judges Benchbook: Civil Proceedings - Trial (CJER, 1997 - 2016)
- Consultant, California Judges Benchbook: Civil Proceedings - After Trial (CJER, 1998 - 2016)
- Consultant, California Judges Benchbook: Discovery (CJER, 1998 - 2015)
- Consultant, California Judges Benchbook: Juvenile Court Administrative Deskbook (CJER, 2003)
- Consultant, California Trial Objections, 2d Edition (CEB, 1995)
- Consultant, Jefferson's Evidence Benchbook, 3d Edition (CEB, 1997, 2011-Present), Chapter 35 – "Evidence of Character, Habit and Custom"
- Author, "African-American Women on the California Bench: A History" (Daily Journal, March 26, 2019)
- Op-Ed, "Advice to Trial Judges and Judge Wannabes" (Daily Journal, January 7, 2012 ed.)
- Op-Ed, "Pioneer Spirit" (Daily Journal, March 5, 2007 ed.)
- Co-Author, "A Court-Appointed Special Advocate: Changing A Foster Child's Life" (The [Alameda County Bar Association] Bulletin, October 2001)
- Author, "350 Days to Trial: Strategies For Survival Under Trial Court Delay Reduction Programs" (CEB Special Supplement, Spring, 1988)
- Author, "Unfair Media Coverage of Judicial Misconduct Investigations (Or Taking Landmark Communications Too Far)," (The San Francisco Attorney, Aug/Sep, 1987 ed.)
- Author, "Black Women Pioneers in the Law," (The Historical Reporter [a publication of the Historical Society of the U.S. Dist. Ct, Northern Dist. Of CA], Spring 1987 ed.)

JUDICIAL AND LEGAL EDUCATION FACULTY EXPERIENCE AND INVOLVEMENT:

Judicial Council/California Center for Judicial Education and Research ("CJER")

- Dean, B.E. Witkin Judicial College (2000 - 2002; Associate Dean, 1998-2000)
- Chair, New Judge Education Planning Committee (2000 - 2002; Vice Chair, 1998-2000)
- Faculty: *Basic Civil Law Courses (Landlord/Tenant; Minor's Compromise, etc.)* (1994); *Civil Law Update* (Municipal Courts Institute, 1994-1995); *Civil Settlement Techniques* (B.E. Witkin Judicial College, 1996-2001); *Common Evidence Problems* (Civil Procedure Institute, 1992); *Consumer Law* (Civil Procedure Institute, 1997; Judicial College & CJSP, 1994-1997); *Criminal Law Overview* (CJSP, 2006-2008); *Defaults and Dismissals* (Judicial College, 1996-1998); *Genetics and the Courts* (Judicial College, 2001); *Genetics, Ethics, and Social Responsibility* (Genetics in the Courtroom Conference, 1999); *How to Make Your Court User Friendly* (CJSP 1993); *Juvenile Dependency* (Judicial College, 2002, 2003); *Marsden & Faretta* (Judicial College, 2005); *Negligence/Proposition 51* (CJSP, 1995; Civil Procedure Institute 1994); *Overlaps: But I Thought I Was a Civil Judge!* (CJSP 2005); *Pathways to the Bench* (Various Programs, 2019) *Preliminary Hearings* (Judicial College, 2007, CJSP 2008; *Poverty Simulation Workshop* (Various programs, 2019); *Online Course* 2010); *Techniques in Judicial Education* (CJSP 1997); *Urban Judges Roundtable* (1993);
- Chair, Planning Committee, Municipal and Justice Courts Institute (1994)
- Planning Committee Member, Municipal Courts Institute (1995)
- Planning Committee Member, Continuing Judicial Studies Program (1995-1998)
- Planning Committee Member & Faculty, "Genetics in the Courtroom" Conference (1999)
- Planning Committee Member, Civil Law Institute (1996)
- Seminar Leader, Judicial College (1995)
- Fairness in the California Courts (Trained as Instructor)
- Judicial Council Liaison to CJER Governing Committee (1997 - 1998)
- Attendee, Mini-Leadership Conference (1996)

Alameda County Bar Association

- *Strategies for Eliminating Bias in the Legal Profession* (2011, 2012)
- *Winning Strategies in Settlement* (2017)

California Judges Association- Faculty

- *Poverty Simulation Workshop (2018 Annual Meeting)*
- *If I Had Known Then . . .* (2017 Mid-Year Meeting)
- *Justice in the Balance: The 2020 Report* (1994 Annual Meeting)

Continuing Education of the Bar ("CEB") – Faculty

- *Analyzing Key Evidence Issues: The Jefferson Approach* (1998)

Hastings College of Law, San Francisco, CA - Faculty

- Adjunct Professor/Legal Writing and Research Instructor (1983-1984; 1981-1982)

National Bar Association

- Education Committee Co-Chair and Faculty, 2016 Mid-Year and Annual Meetings
- Bail Reform (2018)
- Innocence Projects and Wrongful Convictions: Lessons for Judges (2019)

National Institute of Trial Advocacy Faculty

- Faculty, Western Regional Program (1990)

National Judicial College, Reno, NV Faculty

- Drug Courts: The Judicial Response (1997 [Team Leader]; 1996)

Practising Law Institute Faculty

- *Strategies for Eliminating Bias in the Legal Profession* (2011, 2016) ; *Diversity Pipeline: State Bar Diversity Pipeline Project* (2006)

The Rutter Group Faculty

- Enforcing Debts and Judgments (1997)

The State Bar of California Faculty

- Numerous courses on Diversity in the Legal Profession/Judicial Diversity (2006-present)
- Chair, Planning Committee, Judicial Diversity Summits presented in 2006 and 2011, and Member, Planning Committee for Judicial Diversity Summit presented in 2016

University of the South Pacific School of Law, Suva, Fiji

- *Removing Gender and Racial Bias in the Legal Profession - California's Experience* (2012)

DISTINCTIONS, HONORS, AND AWARDS:

- Crystal Gavel Award, Judicial Council of the California Association of Black Lawyers, 2020
- Special Lifetime Achievement Award, Charles Houston Bar Association, 2019
- Multicultural Bar Alliance of Los Angeles Award, 2018
- Alba Witkin Humanitarian Award, California Judges Association/California Judges Foundation, 2016
- Spirit of Excellence Award, American Bar Association, 2014
- Diversity Award, State Bar of California, 2013; Commendation for Diversity Work, 2016
- Hall of Fame Award, Charles Houston Bar Association, 2012
- Woman Jurist of Distinction Award, Women Lawyers of Alameda County, 2012
- Distinguished Service Award (Judge of the Year), Alameda County Bar Association, 2012
- Judicial Excellence Award, Charles Houston Bar Association, 2008
- Champion of Unity Award, Minority Bar Coalition, 2007
- Bernard S. Jefferson Judge of the Year Award, California Association of Black Lawyers, 2007, 1994
- Rose Bird Memorial Award, California Women Lawyers, 2007
- Benjamin Travis Community Service Award, Charles Houston Bar Association, 2006, 1991
- President's Award, California Women Lawyers, 2005
- Unsung Heroines Award, Oakland Bay Area Chapter of Jack and Jill of America, Inc., 2005
- Wilmont Sweeney Juvenile Court Judge of the Year Award, Juvenile Court Judges of California, 2003
- Outstanding Jurist Award, National Bar Association, Women Lawyers Division, 2002
- Ella Hill Hutch Award, Statewide, Black Women Organized For Political Action/PAC, 2002
- Outstanding Achievement Award, Black Women Lawyers of Northern California, 2000
- First African-American woman selected as Dean and Associate Dean of California's Judicial College
- President's Award, Charles Houston Bar Association, 1994

- "Judge Brenda Harbin-Forte Day" declared in City of Oakland on November 19, 1992
- Woman of the Year Award, Oakland Business & Professional Women, 1992
- Nat'l Black Law Students Association's Tribute to Black Women in the Legal Profession, 1988
- An Outstanding Young Woman of America, 1983
- Argued two cases before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, both resulting in published opinions
- First African-American woman President of the Alameda County Bar Association
- First African-American woman to clerk for the Central Staff of the Ninth Circuit
- First African-American woman elected Berkeley Law School (formerly Boalt Hall) Class President
- Delivered a commencement address at high school, college, and law school graduations

CURRENT MEMBERSHIPS/AFFILIATIONS:

- Alameda County Bar Association (President, January 1-24, 1992 (term ended on appointment to the bench on January 24, 1999); President-Elect, 1991; Board member, 1990; Chair and Vice-Chair, Law Day Committee, 1995 & 1994; Member, Drug Task Force, 1995; Co-Chair, Legislature Liaison Committee, 1988-1989)
- American Bar Association
- Bernard E. & Alba Witkin Charitable Foundation (Vice President, 2016-Present; Board Member, 2015-Present)
- Black Women Lawyers Association of Northern California (President, 1986)
- California Association of Black Lawyers (Vice President, North, 1987-1989; Judicial Advisor-North, 2006-2014; 2017-Present); President's Special Assistant [Judicial], 1992-1997)
- California Judges Association 1992 - present (Chair, Annual Meeting Planning Committee, 2015-2016; Co-Chair, Judicial Education Committee, 2006-2008)
- California Women Lawyers (Judicial Liaison and Board Member, 1998 – 2005 [Presented numerous "So, You Want to be a Judge?" programs]; District 3A Governor, 1989-1990)
- Center for Youth Development through Law (Board Member, 2010 - Present)
- Charles Houston Bar Association (Executive Board Member and Newsletter Editor, 1988)
- Judicial Council of the California Association of Black Lawyers (1992-Present; Chair, 2018-2019; Co-Chair-North, 2017-2018; Co-Producer, Membership Directory, 2005-present; Treasurer, 1993 -1997)
- National Association of Women Judges
- National Bar Association (Judicial Council, 1992-Present; Co-Chair, Judicial Council Education Committee, 2015-2016; Board of Governors, 1987-1988; Assistant Regional Director, Region IX, 1987-1988)

PAST MEMBERSHIPS/AFFILIATIONS:

- Alta Bates Medical Center (Community Member, 1993; Associate Trustee, 1994-1996)
- American Bar Foundation, (ABF Fellow, 1993-1996)
- Boalt Hall Alumni Association Board of Trustees (1998 -2000)
- Business & Professional Women, Oakland
- East Oakland Youth Development Center (Board Member, 1985-1986)
- Edward J. McFetridge American Inn of Court (Master, 1993-1995; Membership Chair, 1994-95)
- Juvenile Court Judges of California (a section of the CJA) Executive Committee, 2000 - 2004
- The Judge Patricia Ann McKinley Memorial Foundation, (Founding Board Member), 1986-1987
- McClymonds High School Law & Government Academy, (Advisory Board; Donald P. McCullum Youth Court Board, Honorary Chair)
- National Association of Negro Business & Professional Women
- Oakland Certified Development Corp. (Board Member, 1988)

PERSONAL:

Born in Meridian, Mississippi; One child; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild