

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS

CEREMONIAL MISC. No. 02-22

IN RE: THE MATTER OF THE RETIREMENT OF ANNE P. STYGLES

Before BARTLEY, *Chief Judge*, and PIETSCH, GREENBERG, ALLEN, MEREDITH, TOTH, FALVEY, LAURER, and JAQUITH, *Judges*, and KRAMER, HOLDAWAY, GREENE, KASOLD, HAGEL, MOORMAN, LANCE, DAVIS, and SCHOELEN, *Senior Judges*.

ORDER

Before the Court is the matter of the retirement of Anne P. Stygles, the Court's Chief Deputy Clerk for the last 22 years. Before coming to the Court, Ms. Stygles distinguished herself as a court administrative expert with 13 years with District of Columbia courts, and 6 years as the Chief Deputy Clerk for Montgomery County Maryland Circuit Court. With a graduate degree in Criminal Justice Administration and a fellowship with the National Center for State Court's Institute of Court Management Court Executive Development Program, Ms. Stygles arrived at the Court ready to take on tremendous Veterans Court transformations, including an expanded bench and strong caseload growth.

In 2000, her first year at 625 Indiana Avenue, the Court opened 2,442 new cases and decided 2,164 cases. As manager of the Court's largest section, the Public Office, Ms. Stygles served as the principal custodian of all case-related filings and led staff in keeping track of documents as cases progressed through the Court to, in some cases, appeals to higher courts. At that time, cases were initiated on paper and pleadings and records were on paper as well. Maintaining that paper was a challenge, both organizationally and physically. Litigants wanting to view their files came to the Court and were assisted by Public Office staff. The Court's caseload steadily grew, and by 2009, the Public Office was managing twice as many appeals as it had in 2000.

In 2008, Ms. Stygles took on what is likely the most significant administrative transformation in the Court's history, when the Court commenced efforts to go paperless. Implementing the federal courts' Case Management/Electronic Case Filing system was a massive undertaking. The associated challenges—anticipating and shaping software needs, training staff, drafting new Court Rules for practitioners, and massive reorganization—took nearly 2 years. The transformation to a paperless system, largely made possible by Ms. Stygles's administrative skills and tenaciousness, allows the Court to manage appeals levels that have approached 9,000 active cases. Litigants who can electronically file pleadings from anywhere, and a public who can access Court documents from anywhere, can thank Ms. Stygles for her efforts and accomplishments in this area.

The Public Office is a professional team of docket clerks, quality assurance specialists, and technical and supervisory experts. It remains the largest section of the Court, with a current staff of 25 and plans for further expansion. Ms. Stygles has made sure that the Public Office has not strayed from several overarching principles that she and her team model. First, the Court may have many cases, but a veteran has only one—this means being accessible to each litigant who needs help understanding where their case is in the process and reassuring the litigant that the case is on track. Second, case management must be current to the day, and all Public Office personnel, including Ms. Stygles, make that happen. This involves methodically and expertly keeping track of each case. It is these dual commitments that enhance confidence in the Court's judicial review.

Ms. Stygles is recognized for her outstanding service as a dedicated, loyal, and distinguished public servant who leads by example in everything she does. Her accomplishments reflect great credit upon her and the Court.

Upon consideration of the foregoing, and as she departs to enjoy retirement, it is

ORDERED that Anne P. Stygles will take with her our admiration for her dedicated Government career, our gratitude for the years of outstanding service she rendered to the Court, the warmth of our continued friendship, and our very best wishes.

DATED: December 14, 2022

PER CURIAM.