

Former Hamline Law Assistant Dean Appointed as Chief Justice of Minnesota Supreme Court



Natalie Hudson, a seasoned legal professional who once served as an assistant dean at Hamline University School of Law, has achieved a historic milestone by being appointed as the Chief Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court. This significant promotion, orchestrated by Governor Tim Walz, is notable for making Hudson the first person of color to lead the state's highest judicial institution.

Governor Walz commended Justice Hudson's extensive judicial experience, expressing confidence in her ability to advance a vision of fairness and uphold the dignity of all Minnesotans through her new role as Chief Justice.

Justice Hudson's legal journey has been marked by a commitment to inclusivity and community engagement. As the assistant dean of student affairs at Hamline University School of Law from 1989 to 1992, she played a pivotal role in attracting students of color to the institution. She also provided valuable guidance to students, addressing academic and career-related concerns and personal matters affecting their studies.

In an interview with Hamline University's student newspaper, *The Oracle*, in 1990, Justice Hudson expressed her enthusiasm for her diverse range of responsibilities. She cherished the opportunity to be deeply involved in the community and noted that she had missed this level of engagement.

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Colleagues and faculty members remember her as a proficient multitasker who maintained strong relationships with both students and staff. Professor Emerita Marie Failingler lauded Justice Hudson's ability to manage numerous responsibilities effectively and highlighted her rapport with faculty and staff.

Justice Hudson's career trajectory took her from Hamline Law to the position of St. Paul's city attorney in 1992. She subsequently served in the Minnesota attorney general's office before receiving an appointment to the Court of Appeals in 2002 by Governor Jesse Ventura. After an illustrious 13-year tenure on the Court of Appeals, Justice Hudson was elevated to the Minnesota Supreme Court in 2015, following an appointment by Governor Mark Dayton.

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Even after ascending to the bench, Justice Hudson remained dedicated to supporting and mentoring students. Professor Leanne Fuith noted that she continued to generously invest her time in Mitchell Hamline law students, offering mentorship and insights into the workings of the Minnesota judiciary. Her commitment to nurturing the next generation of legal professionals underscores her deep investment in the future of the legal field.

Justice Hudson's appointment to the Supreme Court in 2015 was particularly noteworthy as she succeeded retiring Justice Alan Page, a distinguished NFL Hall of Famer. Notably, her father, Don Hudson, had also made strides in breaking down racial barriers in the world of sports. Despite facing significant obstacles, he became the first Black head football coach at a predominantly white college in the modern era when he assumed the head coaching position at Macalester College in St. Paul in the early 1970s.

Don't be a silent ninja! Let us know your thoughts in the comment section below.