



**NEWS ADVISORY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

October 28, 2016

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Gary Ireland, Public Information Officer, (206) 684-8710

Gary.Ireland@seattle.gov

Presiding Judge Karen Donohue Honored with Prestigious NAWJ Leadership Award

Seattle Municipal Court Presiding Judge Karen Donohue has been awarded the 2016 Justice Vaino Spencer Leadership Award by the Honorable Lisa Walsh, Past President of the [National Association of Women Judges \(NAWJ\)](#). Judge Donohue was selected for her outstanding leadership in promoting the association's vision, core values and mission.

Since joining in 2011, Judge Donohue has contributed significantly to NAWJ. She is Co-Chair of the 38th Annual Conference Education Committee, planning substantial and relevant programs for the [2016 Conference](#) held earlier this month in Seattle, Washington. She served as Project Manager for a full redesign of the association's website and is currently the Washington State Chair.

Formed in 1979 by Justice Vaino Spencer and Justice Joan Dempsey Klein, NAWJ's mission is to promote the judicial role of protecting the rights of individuals under the rule of law through strong, committed, diverse judicial leadership, fairness and equality in the courts and equal access to justice.

First elected to the Seattle Municipal Court bench in 2011, Judge Donohue is currently serving her first term as Presiding Judge. In addition to her work with NAWJ, Judge Donohue is a member of a number of committees and boards including: the Washington State District and Municipal Court Judges Association (Board Member, Co-Chair Education Committee), King County Trial Court Coordinating Council (Chair), King County Bar Association Awards Committee, and the Regional Law, Safety and Justice Committee. Judge Donohue co-founded the [Seattle Youth Traffic Court](#) in 2012, a program that provides teen drivers an opportunity to maintain a clean driving record by having their case heard by a court of their peers.

Judge Donohue is an active community volunteer, working with youth in a number of Mock Trial programs including the Seattle Academy of Arts and Science (SAAS), Pathfinder K-8, and the YMCA programs. She has presided over the Seattle University Law School Mock Motion Hearings and Mock Trials programs. Judge Donohue is a Judge with King County Kids' Court, preparing victims and witnesses in felony matters for their day in court. She volunteers with the Pacific Science Center Crime Solvers Camp and the Holy Names Academy High School Law Class. Judge Donohue is a frequent speaker on legal careers at the University of Washington.

Judge Donohue is also the 2016 recipient of the [Judge William Nevins Award](#) for her outstanding contributions to youth and civic education.

About Seattle Municipal Court

The Seattle Municipal Court provides a forum to resolve alleged violations of the law in a respectful, independent and impartial manner. Seattle Municipal Court processes more cases than any other municipal court in the State of Washington with seven elected Judges and five appointed Magistrates. The Court adjudicates misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor crimes, infractions, and civil violations authorized under the Seattle Municipal Code and certain Revised Code of Washington statutes. For more information visit: www.seattle.gov/courts.