



Office of the District Executive

Eugene J. Corcoran
District Court Executive

Margo K. Brodie
Chief Judge

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CONTACT

Eugene J. Corcoran (718) 613-2260
districtexec_nyed@nyed.uscourts.gov

Magistrate Judge A. Kathleen Tomlinson of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York passed away Sunday night, October 17, 2021, after a long battle with cancer. She was seventy-three years old.

Appointed a United States Magistrate Judge by the Eastern District Board of Judges in 2006, Judge Tomlinson served the Eastern District of New York for fifteen years.

Judge Tomlinson received a B.A. in English and Sociology, *magna cum laude*, from Rutgers University in 1972 and an M.A. in English and American Literature from Long Island University (“L.I.U.”) in 1975. For fourteen years, Judge Tomlinson served L.I.U. as an academic administrator and rose to the position of Assistant University Dean for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences with responsibilities spanning L.I.U.’s six campuses. She was also an adjunct faculty member in the English Department.

After graduating from St. John’s University Law School in 1987, Judge Tomlinson joined the Appeals Bureau of the Nassau County Legal Aid Society. She then served as a federal law clerk to the late United States District Judge Arthur D. Spatt. In 1991, Judge Tomlinson entered private practice at Farrell Fritz, P.C., in Uniondale, New York, where she became a partner in 1998 and served as Chair of the firm’s Pro Bono Committee. Her practice concentrated in complex litigation, labor and employment law, white collar defense, and civil rights litigation in the state and federal trial and appellate courts.

In addition to her prior work as a member of the Criminal Justice Act Panel for the Eastern District, Judge Tomlinson previously served as counsel to the Eastern District’s Board of Judges Grievance Committee and as a member of the Magistrate Judge Merit Selection Panel for the District. She was also a past Director of the Nassau County Bar Association and served as a board member of the Long Island Fund for Women and Girls from 1999 through 2005.

Prior to taking the bench in 2006, Judge Tomlinson had been honored as one of the “Top 50 Women in Business” by Long Island Business News, twice named as one of the “Top Ten Leaders in Employment Law” by Digital Press International and received the Suffolk County Bar Foundation/Nassau Suffolk Law Services “Outstretched Hands of Justice” Award for her pro bono work while at Farrell Fritz.

Judge Tomlinson had an unwavering commitment to promoting civic education and inspiring students across Long Island through her membership in the Federal Bar Association and on the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit’s Civic Education Committee. Among her many activities were organizing special Naturalization Ceremonies at Sagamore Hill in Oyster Bay

for Constitution Day, speaking with students visiting the courthouse for the *Bench in Your Backyard* program, and other similar community events. She also judged moot court competitions, such as the virtual civics education programs designed to provide middle and high school students with a greater understanding of the federal justice system. An active member of the Eastern District of New York Chapter of the Federal Bar Association, she developed and chaired the Chapter's Continuing Legal Education ("CLE") Committee. Under her leadership, the CLE Committee offered practitioners programs throughout the year aimed at improving the practice of federal law, including an annual Civil and Criminal Practice Update. Judge Tomlinson was a frequent lecturer on labor relations and employment matters as well as federal civil practice and litigation. She created and produced regional conferences dealing with cutting-edge workplace concerns such as multicultural diversity, glass ceiling, and workplace violence issues.

Judge Tomlinson was a member of the Federal Magistrate Judges Association, the Federal Bar Council, the American Bar Association, and the New York State Bar Association, where she served for many years on the Commercial and Federal Litigation Section's Committee on Ethics and Professionalism. She was also a member of the Nassau County and Suffolk County Bar Associations, where she served on the Labor and Employment Law and Federal Courts Committees.

We mourn the loss of our dear friend and cherished colleague. Despite her battles, her warm and generous personality never wavered.