Members and friends of the Michigan District Judges Association (“MDJA”): Welcome to a new membership year and to the new MDJA Website! My theme for this year is “Looking to the Past and Preparing for the Future.”

MDJA does extraordinary work on behalf of district judges, district courts and the people whom we serve. My vision for this year is to analyze the things that we have accomplished and reorganize the structure of our organization such that our processes and procedures are streamlined and documented, thereby enabling MDJA to continue to serve its members in the most effective and efficient manner, now and into the future. This theme of reflection and planning could not be more appropriate than now, during the year of the 50th anniversary of the creation of the district courts. We will be celebrating the legislative decision to create our courts by looking at the history of the creation of the district courts and the many accomplishments of district judges over the years thru MDJA. Stay tuned, as we will be presenting you with a history book regarding the district courts and the work of MDJA as well as you will be receiving a “tool kit” to help you decide how your courts may be plan festivities to celebrate the creation of the district courts and raise awareness of the courts in your local communities. Moreover, we are looking forward to celebrating this legislative milestone during our annual conference in August, so be sure to join us!!

Regarding future frontiers, MDJA has some exciting new changes that we are implementing as a direct result of hearing your desires in the report on "Strategic Inquiry with Appreciative Intent" which was presented at our last Annual Conference. Some of these changes include a longer conference with more educational classes; an effort to keep you better informed of all of our important work via our new website and telephone app, as well as more regular communications from me. The website is a key component in streamlining the search for information and documenting MDJA’s work and the responsibilities of all the Board positions. Among many features in the members only section, you can search thru past discussion posts on our Google list serve and you can topically search for briefs and other documents which are contributed by your colleagues. You will even be able to view and search for information on all the district judge across the state! Moreover, the telephone app will make accessing this information easy when you are on the go!

 MDJA now has a membership team, which will be actively seeking input as to your membership needs. They will be planning several regional meetings across the state, which will keep MDJA accessible to you all year round and keep you advised of and engaged in our activities and initiatives. You will be hearing a lot more from us on these changes and more! I am excited to craft the new MDJA of the 21st century. Of course, MDJA’s fundamental work has not changed. We continue to monitor and take action on changes in court rules, legislation and other issues which affect district judges and the interests of justice in the “people’s courts” around the state. I am looking forward to serving you this year as your President and continuing the history of commitment to justice that has established MDJA as a respected organization state-wide! Happy Anniversary to you all!

Warmest regards,



Shelia R. Johnson

46th District Court

Southfield, MI

MDJA President 2018