

Supreme Court

Constitution, Article 7 § 1

History and Function—The Oklahoma Supreme Court determines all issues of a civil nature in the State of Oklahoma. Members of this court are appointed by the governor from a list of three names submitted by the Oklahoma Judicial Nominating Commission.

Name	City	District
James Edmondson, Chief Justice	Muskogee	7
Steven W. Taylor, Vice-Chief Justice	McAlester	2
Tom Colbert	Tulsa	6
Rudolph Hargrave	Wewoka	8
Yvonne Kauger	Colony	4
Marian P. Opala	Oklahoma City	3
John F. Reif	Tulsa	1
Joseph M. Watt	Altus	9
James R. Winchester	Chickasha	5

Administration—Michael D. Evans, Administrative Director of the Courts; Mike Mayberry, Deputy Director; Debra Charles, General Counsel. Administrative Office of the Courts is located in the Denver Davison Building, 1915 North Stiles, Suite 305, Oklahoma City 73105 • 405/521-2450 • www.oscn.net • Agency Code 677, IA

Clerk of the Appellate Courts (Constitution, Article 7 § 5; 20 O.S. 2001, § 78), Michael S. Richie. Clerk Office is located in Room B-2, State Capitol, Oklahoma City, OK 73105 • 405/521-2163

Marshal—Nancy Parrott, State Capitol, Room 245 • 405/521-2263

Staff Attorneys

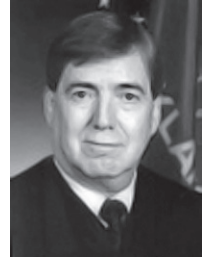
Name	Justice	Name	Justice
David Dixon	Tom Colbert	Spurrier/Young	Marian Opala
Kate DoDoo	Tom Colbert	Donna Embry	Steven W. Taylor
Diane Barnett	James Edmondson	Barbara Kinney	Steven W. Taylor
Michael Elliott	James Edmondson	Paul White	James Winchester
Merlaine Anderson	Rudolph Hargrave	Jill van Egmond	James Winchester
Frank Sewell	Rudolph Hargrave	Vicki Angus	Joseph M. Watt
Alana House	Yvonne Kauger	Cindy George	Joseph M. Watt
W. Kyle Shifflett	Yvonne Kauger		
Sharon Schooley	John Reif		
Hilda Harlton	John Reif		
Bobbie Moore	Marian Opala		

Referees

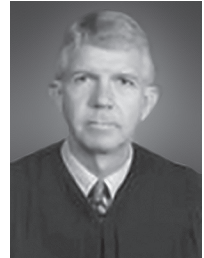
Greg Albert	Louise Helms
Daniel E. Karim	Barbara Swimley

Justices of the Supreme Court

Chief Justice James Edmondson, District 7. Born in Kansas City, Missouri, Edmondson received a bachelor's degree from Northeastern State University in 1967. He served in the United States Navy from 1967 to 1969. Following his military service, Edmondson enrolled at Georgetown University Law School and received his law degree in 1973. His legal career includes serving as Muskogee County's assistant district attorney from 1976 to 1978, assistant United States attorney from 1978 to 1980, and acting U.S. attorney for Oklahoma's Eastern District from 1980 to 1981. Edmondson entered private law practice and was a partner in the Edmondson Law Office from 1981 through 1983. He served as district judge for District 15 in 1983 and continued in that capacity for twenty years. Governor Brad Henry appointed Edmondson as justice to the Oklahoma Supreme Court on December 2, 2003. He and his wife, Suzanne, have two grown children, Jimmy and Sarah, and a grandson, Jack. Edmondson can be reached at Room 245, State Capitol Building, Oklahoma City, OK 73105, or 405/521-3830.



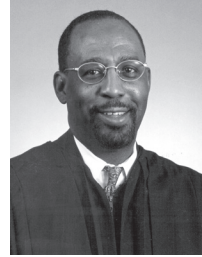
Vice-Chief Justice Steven W. Taylor, District 2. Born on June 7, 1949, in Henryetta, Oklahoma, Taylor attended McAlester Public Schools. He received a bachelor's degree in political science from Oklahoma State University in 1971 and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Oklahoma College of Law in 1974. He is the only person to have received the highest alumni awards at both OSU and OU. Taylor joined the United States Marine Corps and served both active duty from 1974 to 1978. He was trained as an infantry platoon commander and later served as a prosecutor and chief defense counsel. In 1977 he became the youngest judge in the U.S. armed forces. He achieved the rank of major. Following his military career, Taylor practiced law in McAlester from 1978 to 1984. Taylor's public service career began in 1980, when he was elected to the McAlester City Council. In 1982 he was elected mayor of McAlester, making him the youngest in the city's history. In 1983 he received recognition as one of three "Outstanding Young Oklahomans." Recognizing Taylor's leadership in economic development, the City of McAlester named a multi-million industrial park for him, where many industries now employ several hundred Oklahomans. The city further honored Taylor in 1997 by naming him "Citizen of the Year." Governor George Nigh appointed Taylor associate district judge in 1984. Taylor became the first associate district judge elected president of the Oklahoma Judicial Conference. In 1994 he was elected district judge and chief judge of the eighteenth Judicial District that included McIntosh and Pittsburg counties. In 1997 and 2003 he was elected presiding judge of the East Central Judicial Administrative District that encompasses ten counties. During the twenty years Taylor served as a trial judge, he presided over more than 500 jury trials including Terry Nichols's Oklahoma City bombing trial. He has received numerous awards including the Oklahoma Bar Association 2003 "Award of Judicial Excellence." On September 23, 2004, Governor Brad Henry appointed Taylor as justice of the Oklahoma Supreme Court. In 2007, Oklahoma magazine named him as one of the "100 Who Shaped Us," a list of Oklahomans who influenced the first one hundred years of our state. In 2009 he was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame. Taylor can be reached



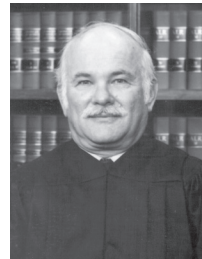
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at Room 200, State Capitol Building, Oklahoma City, OK 73105, or 405/521-3844, or steven.taylor@oscn.net.

Justice Tom Colbert, District 6. Colbert was born on December 30, 1949, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He attended Eastern Oklahoma State College, where he received an associate's degree in 1970. He also received a bachelor's degree in 1973 from Kentucky State University, and a master's degree in education from Eastern Kentucky State University in 1976. Colbert served in the United States Army in the Criminal Investigation Division from 1973 to 1975. After an honorable discharge, Colbert enrolled in the University of Oklahoma School of Law, and received a Juris Doctor degree in 1982. During his collegiate career, Colbert was named to Phi Delta Phi and as an NCAA All-American in track and field. Colbert served as an assistant dean at Marquette University Law School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, from 1982 to 1984. He returned to Oklahoma and served as assistant district attorney in Oklahoma County from 1984 to 1986. He entered private law practice and worked for Miles-LaGrange & Colbert from 1986 to 1989, and with Colbert and Associates from 1989 to 2000. He also served as assistant general council for the Oklahoma Department of Human Services from 1988 to 1989 and from 1999 to 2000. Colbert received a judicial appointment on the Oklahoma Court of Civil Appeals in November 1999, and served as the court's chief judge in 2004. Governor Brad Henry appointed Colbert as justice to the Oklahoma Supreme Court on October 7, 2004. He is the first African American to be appointed to the Oklahoma Court of Civil Appeals and the Oklahoma Supreme Court. Colbert and his wife, Doretha Guion, have three grown children. He continues active participation in the American, National, Oklahoma, and Tulsa County bar associations. He also participates in the Track & Field Masters Level mentoring program for young men, and the summer reading program for children. Colbert can be reached at Room 204, State Capitol Building, Oklahoma City, OK 73105, or 405/521-3843.



Justice Rudolph Hargrave, District 8. A resident of Wewoka, Oklahoma, Hargrave attended Wewoka Public Schools, East Central State University, and the University of Oklahoma, where he received his law degree in 1949. He is a member of Delta Theta Phi legal fraternity. Hargrave worked in private law practice in Wewoka from 1949 to 1964. His public career began in 1964 when he became county judge for Seminole County, serving in that capacity until 1967. He served as Seminole County Superior Court judge from 1967 to 1969, and as Seminole County district judge from 1969 to 1978, 22nd Judicial District, chief judge, Office Number 3. He also served as chief judge for Administrative Zone Number 3. Hargrave was appointed justice to the Oklahoma Supreme Court on October 10, 1978, and retained by the voters for six-year terms in 1980, 1986, 1992, 1998, and 2004. He was elected as the court's chief justice in January 1989. During his first term as chief justice, Hargrave was elected by the National Conference of Chief Justices to serve as the organization's vice-president. He is the only Oklahoma Supreme Court justice to serve in that position. Hargrave was elected for the second time as chief justice on January 1, 2001. Hargrave is a member of the American, Oklahoma, and Seminole County bar associations. He also is a member of the Oklahoma Judicial Conference. Hargrave and



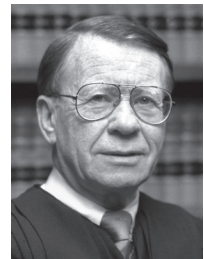
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his wife, Madeline, have three children—Cindy Keefer, John Robert Hargrave, and Jana Howard. He and his wife continue to live in Wewoka, and are members of the First United Methodist Church. Hargrave can be reached at Room 240, State Capitol Building, Oklahoma City, OK 73105, or 405/521-3847.

Justice Yvonne Kauger, District 4. A fourth generation Oklahoman, Kauger was born in Cordell, Oklahoma, on August 3, 1937, and raised in Colony. A graduate of Southwestern Oklahoma State University and the Oklahoma City University School of Law, Kauger served as presiding judge for the Court on the Judiciary, and on the Law School and Bench and Bar Committees of the Oklahoma Bar Association. Governor George Nigh appointed her as justice to the Oklahoma Supreme Court on March 11, 1984. She served as the court's chief justice from January 1997 to December 1998, and she is the only woman to serve as the court's chief justice and vice chief justice. She currently chairs the Building Committee for the Oklahoma Judicial Center. Kauger founded the Gallery of the Plains Indian in Colony, co-founded Red Earth, and has served as coordinator for the Sovereignty Symposium since its inception in 1987. The symposium is a seminar on Indian law sponsored by the Oklahoma Supreme Court. Kauger has received numerous honors and awards throughout her distinguished career including being named valedictorian of her graduating class at Colony High School, and graduating first in her class from the OCU School of Law. In 1984 she was adopted by the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes of Oklahoma. She was named National Delta Zeta in 1988, and received the Oklahoma City Pioneer Award in 1989. Kauger served as the featured speaker at the Twentieth William O. Douglas Lecture Series at Gonzaga University in 1990. She received an honorary doctorate degree from OCU in 1991, and has been named as an honorary alumnus by both OCU and Southwestern Oklahoma State University. In June 1999 the American Judicature Society awarded Kauger the Herbert Harley Award in recognition of her outstanding efforts to improve the administration of justice. That same year, the Oklahoma Bar Association honored her with the Judicial Excellence Award. In March 2001 Justice Kauger was inducted into the Oklahoma Women's Hall of Fame. In 2004 she was named one of the ten most notable women in Oklahoma City by the Oklahoma City Orchestra League. In July 2004 she donated Main Street in Colony, which her great grandfather built, to Southwestern Oklahoma State University to be used to promote the arts in western Oklahoma. In 2005 Kauger received the Governor's Art Award. In addition, she is a member of the District State-Federal Judicial Council and the Washita County Hall of Fame. Kauger can be reached at Room 208, State Capitol Building, Oklahoma City, OK 73105, or 405/521-3841.



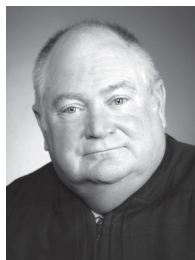
Justice Marian Opala, District 3. Born in Lodz, Poland, in 1921, Opala became a United States citizen in 1953, and graduated from Oklahoma City University School of Law the same year. He earned a BSB degree in economics from Oklahoma City University in 1957, and a Master of Laws degree from New York University School of Law in 1968. Opala began his legal career as assistant county attorney in Oklahoma County. He entered private law practice in 1956, and served as a referee for the Oklahoma Supreme Court from 1960 to 1965. He later worked as staff lawyer for Justice Rooney McInerney. From 1969 to 1977 Opala directed the state's court system as its first administrative



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director. He also served as judge on the State Industrial Court when it was renamed the Workers' Compensation Court in 1977–1978. Governor David Boren appointed Opala as justice to the Oklahoma Supreme Court on November 21, 1978. Voters approved him in 1980 for the remainder of his predecessor's term, and retained him for six-year terms in 1982, 1988, 1994, 2000, and 2006. He served as the court's chief justice from January 1, 1991 to December 31, 1992. Author of numerous legal papers, Opala serves as an adjunct law professor in all three of the in-state law schools. He also is a frequent lecturer at various national judicial and legal education programs. Since 1982 he has represented Oklahoma in the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws, where he is now a lifetime commissioner. A member of the Order of the Coif and of the American Law Institute, Opala was appointed as a public member of the Administrative Conference of the United States in 1993. He is the recipient of the 1997 Oklahoma Bar Association's Award for Judicial Excellence; the 2000 OCU School of Law Lifetime Achievement in Law Award; the 2002 Freedom of Information Oklahoma, First Amendment Award; and was a 2000 inductee into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame. Opala can be reached at Room 238, State Capitol Building, Oklahoma City, OK 73105, or 405/521-3839.

Justice John F. Reif, District 1. Born on June 19, 1951, Reif attended Cascia Hall in Tulsa, graduating in 1969. He attended the University of Tulsa, where he received a bachelor's degree in 1973 and a Juris Doctor degree in 1977. Reif's business and professional positions include serving the public as a police officer in Owasso from 1973 to 1975. He was employed as a planner and grants specialist for the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, Indian Nations Council of Government from 1974 to 1977. From 1978 to 1981 he worked as an assistant district attorney for Tulsa County. In addition, he was a business law adjunct professor at Oral Roberts University from 1983 to 2007, and has served as a faculty member for the National Tribal Judicial Center of the National Judicial College in Reno, Nevada. He received the President's Distinguished Service Award in 1995 from Oral Roberts University. Reif's judicial service includes a position as special district judge for the Fourteenth Judicial District from 1981 to 1984. In 1984 he was appointed judge for the Oklahoma Court of Civil Appeals, serving the court in that capacity until 2007, both as the court's vice chief judge in 1993, and 2001, and as chief judge in 1994 and 2002. On October 22, 2007, Governor Brad Henry appointed Reif as justice to the Oklahoma Supreme Court, and retained by the voters for a six-year term in 2008. Reif has been a member of the Oklahoma Bar Association since 1978. He and his wife have been married for thirty-five years. Reif can be reached at Room 242, State Capitol Building, Oklahoma City, OK 73105, or 405/521-3846.



Justice Joseph M. Watt, District 9. Watt was born on March 8, 1947, in Austin, Texas. He graduated from Austin High School in 1965, received a bachelor's degree in history and government from Texas Tech University in 1969, and a Doctor of Jurisprudence from the University of Texas Law School in 1972. Admitted to practice law in both Texas and Oklahoma, Watt moved to Altus, Oklahoma, in 1973, where he worked in private law from 1973 to 1985. He also served as Altus city prosecutor from 1973 to 1985, and as city attorney from 1980 to 1985. Watt was appointed special district judge for Jackson County in 1985,



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and was elected associate district judge in 1986. He served in that capacity until January 1991, when he was asked to serve as general counsel in Governor David Walters's administration. Watt was appointed as justice to the Oklahoma Supreme Court on May 18, 1992. Watts's judicial service also includes two consecutive terms as Oklahoma Supreme Court chief justice, 2003–2006 and vice chief justice, 2001–2002; Oklahoma Judicial Conference vice president, 1993–1994; Oklahoma Judicial Conference president elect, 1995; Oklahoma Judicial Conference president, 1996; Court on the Judiciary Appellate Division, 1997–2002; Supreme Court Liaison to the Oklahoma Bar Association, 1997–2002; and Supreme Court Liaison to State Drug Courts, 2007–present. His honors include the Delta Theta Phi Law Fraternity Outstanding Law Student in the Nation in 1972; University of Texas Circle of Omnicron Delta Kappa National Honorary Leadership Society, 1972; Paul Harris Fellow; Graduate of the Inaugural Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation Citizens Academy, 2004; Honorary Alumnus, Oklahoma City University School of Law, 2005; and Honorary Highway Patrol Trooper, 2006. He has served as secretary and as president of the Altus Rotary Club. Watt is a member of the Oklahoma and Texas bar associations. He and his wife, Cathy, have four grown children and three grandchildren. Watt can be reached at Room 244, State Capitol Building, Oklahoma City, OK 73105, or 405/521-3848.

Justice James R. Winchester, District 5. Winchester was born on March 23, 1952, in Clinton, Oklahoma, and graduated from Clinton High School in 1970. He received a bachelor's degree from the University of Oklahoma in 1974, and a Juris Doctor degree from Oklahoma City University in 1977. Winchester practiced law in Weatherford and Hinton before being named associate district judge for Caddo County in January 1983. In December 1983, at the age of thirty, Winchester became one of the youngest district judges in the state, when he was appointed district judge for the Sixth Judicial District of Oklahoma. During his tenure as district judge, he tried more than 200 jury trials ranging from fraud to first-degree murder. The Oklahoma Trial Lawyers Association named Winchester the "Outstanding State Trial Court Judge" in 1986. He served as an executive board member of the Oklahoma Judicial Conference from 1992 to 1996. He also served as president of the Oklahoma Judicial Conference in 1995. From August 1997 to January 2000, Winchester served as a United States administrative law judge. Governor Frank Keating appointed him to the Oklahoma Supreme Court on January 4, 2000. Winchester and his wife, former State Representative Susan Winchester, have one son, Davis. Winchester believes children are one of this state's most valuable assets, and he established the second in-state program entitled "Children Coping With Divorce" to assist children during that difficult time. Winchester resides in Chickasha and is a member of the Chickasha First Presbyterian Church. Winchester can be reached at Room 202, State Capitol Building, Oklahoma City, OK 73105, or 405/521-3842.

