

# New Beginnings

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*by Lisa Langton  
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**W**ith all new beginnings come some goodbyes. By the time you read this, I will have left my position as the Oakland County Probate Register. But I have not gone far. I have accepted the newly created position of Deputy Court Administrator for the Circuit Court. My tenure with the Probate Court started while I was in law school, clerking for the Honorable Norman R. Barnard and the Honorable Eugene Arthur Moore. Upon passing the bar, I worked for Williams, Williams, Ruby & Plunkett P.C. and ultimately came back to the Probate Court as Chief of the Probate Estates Division in April 1995. I believed then and I believe now that our Probate Court is the hardest-working and best-operated probate court in the state. Our bench and staff are dedicated to providing the highest level of public service, and over these past 11 years I have been fortunate to see our court become even more efficient and user-friendly.

I want to thank the dedicated Probate staff who run our file room, answer phones and serve the public at our Probate counter every day. These are difficult jobs and the level of compassion and patience that our staff exhibits amazes me. I would also like to thank our dedicated management team consisting of the recently retired Mary Batchelor, Supervisor; Mary Jo Best, Supervisor; and Jill Koney Daly, Chief of Estates and Mental Health. These individuals work tirelessly at their jobs and have dedicated their careers to public service.

I would also like to thank the Oakland County Probate judges: Hon. Barry M. Grant, Chief Judge; Hon. Elizabeth

Pezzetti, Chief Judge Pro Tem; Hon. Linda Hallmark, Presiding Judge of the Estates Division, and Hon. Eugene Arthur Moore. I have worked very closely with these judges over the past several years and have appreciated their support, patience and dedication to the citizens of our county. My experience in working with these judges has given me the opportunities that lay in front of me.

I am pleased to announce that the Oakland County Probate judges have selected Rebecca Schnelz as our new Probate Court Administrator. Rebecca has been a valuable asset to our Probate Court working as Judge Eugene Arthur Moore's Judicial Staff Attorney for several years. Rebecca will be in administrative charge of the Probate Court along with her management team, which will continue to consist of Jill Koney Daly in her new role as Probate Register, and Mary Jo Best, Supervisor extraordinaire! Congratulations to all of them and I look forward to continuing to work with them.

Finally, I must thank the Oakland County Bar Association staff, in particular Jan Anson, who on a regular basis sends out her "gentle reminders" that my LACHES article is due and perhaps even past due. While I will truly miss working with her, I must admit I will not miss racking my brains every month to come up with a topic for this article that will not put the readers to sleep!

Stop by and congratulate Rebecca Schnelz and Jill Koney Daly in their new roles, and I thank all of the OCBA members who have made this job one that I loved and will miss. Stay tuned!