



**The Eighth Biennial  
Just The Beginning Foundation Conference  
“Reaching Back, Lifting Up”**

*The Pathfinder Judges Panel*

**Friday, September 26, 2008  
American University Washington College of Law**



***Pathfinder:*** a discoverer of a route, especially through unmapped territories or uncharted areas of knowledge.

*We will talk with two pathfinder judges and learn their pathway into the federal judiciary.*

*Welcome Remarks*

**Claudio Grossman**, Dean, Washington College of Law  
Paula Lucas, Executive Director, Just the Beginning Foundation

*Introduction of Moderator*

**Adrienne Lawrence**, 3L, President, Black Law Students Association, Washington College of Law

*Moderator*

**Judge Gerald Bruce Lee WCL '76**, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Virginia, Alexandria Division.

*The Pathway from Detroit to the Federal Bench*

**Judge Marcia Cooke**, U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida

*Pathfinder Judge Interview*

*The Pathway from Bonara, Pennsylvania to the Federal Bench*

**Judge Reggie B. Walton WCL '74**, United States District Court for the District of Columbia

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*En Banc: Questions and Answers*

**Judge Cooke** and **Judge Walton**

*Closing Remarks*

**Claudio Grossman**, Dean, Washington College of Law and

*Adjourn*

**Judge Marcia G. Cooke**  
**United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida**



Marcia G. Cooke is a native of Detroit, Michigan. Ms. Cooke is an experienced trial attorney and lawyer and has held a variety of positions in the public sector. Prior to being appointed to the Federal Bench, she was an Assistant Miami-Dade County Attorney. She represented Miami-Dade County in a variety of matters including litigation on behalf of the Housing Agency and defensive tort litigation. Ms. Cooke has also served as the Chief Inspector General for the State of Florida. Governor Jeb Bush appointed Ms. Cooke in 1999. The Chief Inspector General is responsible for promoting accountability, integrity, efficiency and ethical behavior in the agencies under the jurisdiction of the Executive Office of the Governor.

Prior to serving as Chief Inspector General, Ms. Cooke served as an Executive Assistant United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, in Miami, for seven years. Her responsibilities included training and professional development for a staff composed of 200 lawyers and over 200 support personnel, as well as immigration issues and other special projects.

In 1984, she was selected as a United States Magistrate Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan. Responsible for the full range of judicial activities, Ms. Cooke was the youngest federal judicial officer at the time of her appointment. She has also served as a legal services attorney and a public defender, providing representation for the indigent, and an Assistant United States Attorney in the Eastern District of Michigan. As a prosecutor in Michigan and Southern Florida, she successfully prosecuted over thirty criminal jury trials. Ms. Cooke was also in private practice with the law firm of Miro, Miro and Weiner.

In addition to her other responsibilities, Ms. Cooke is an adjunct professor at the University of Miami School of Law where she teaches litigation skills and criminal law. She also served as an adjunct professor at Wayne State University Law School. She is also a longtime faculty member of the National Institute of Trial Advocacy (NITA) and has taught at trial practice and litigation programs throughout the country. Ms. Cooke also lectures on issues related to trial practice and litigation. Having presided over the case of United States of America v. Jose Padilla, she is often called upon to participate in symposiums related to terrorism.

A graduate of the Georgetown University Edmund G. Walsh School of Foreign Service, she remains active in university activities. She is a member of the Board of Governors and served as the national President of the Georgetown University Alumni Association. She was elected to the

University's Board of Directors in 1998. She received her law degree from the Wayne State University Law School in Detroit, Michigan.

Judge Cooke has presided over many interesting cases, among them criminal cases involving the Israeli mafia moving company scams, and various drug offense cases. One of the more memorable multi-defendant drug cases involved the kidnapping and attempted murder of a rival drug trafficker (who happened to have his 3 year old godchild with him). Testimony in the case revealed drug traffickers pawning off Mercedes Benz automobiles in order to acquire cash to complete drug deals; torture of rivals using a household steam iron; boyfriends hiding in closets; and even a love affair between a trafficker and police officer!

Another memorable case Judge Cooke presided over was the terrorism trial of United States of America v. Jose Padilla, et al., currently on appeal. One of the defendants in the trial, Jose Padilla, is the only American citizen detained in a military brig as an enemy combatant. Mr. Padilla, at the behest of his co-defendant, served as a Mujadeen in Afghanistan.

**Judge Reggie B. Walton**  
**United States District Court for the District of Columbia**



Judge Reggie B. Walton assumed his position as a United States District Judge for the District of Columbia on October 29, 2001, after being nominated to the position by President George W. Bush and confirmed by the United States Senate. Judge Walton was also appointed by President Bush in June of 2004, to serve as the Chairperson of the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission, a commission created by the United States Congress and tasked with the mission of identifying methods to curb the incidents of prison rape. Former Chief Justice Rehnquist also appointed Judge Walton to the federal judiciary's Criminal Law Committee, effective October 1, 2005. In May, 2007, Chief Justice John Roberts appointed Judge Walton to serve as a Judge of the United States Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, which is a 7-year appointment.

Judge Walton previously served as an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia from 1981 to 1989 and 1991 to 2001, having been appointed to that position on two occasions by Presidents Ronald Reagan in 1981 and George H. W. Bush in 1991. While serving on the Superior Court, Judge Walton was the Court's Presiding Judge of the Family Division, Presiding Judge of the Domestic Violence Unit and Deputy Presiding Judge of the Criminal Division. Between

1989 and 1991, Judge Walton served as President George H. W. Bush's Associate Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy in the Executive Office of the President and as President Bush's Senior White House Advisor for Crime.

Before his appointment to the Superior Court bench in 1981, Judge Walton served as the Executive Assistant United States Attorney in the Office of the United States Attorney for the District of Columbia, from June, 1980 to July, 1981, and he was an Assistant United States Attorney in that Office from March, 1976 to June, 1980. From June, 1979 to June, 1980, Judge Walton was also the Chief of the Career Criminal Unit in the United States Attorney's Office. Before joining the United States Attorney's Office, Judge Walton was a staff attorney in the Defender Association of Philadelphia from August, 1974 to February, 1976.

Judge Walton was born in Donora, Pennsylvania on February 8, 1949. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from West Virginia State University in 1971 and received his Juris Doctorate degree from The American University, Washington College of Law, in 1974.

Judge Walton has been the recipient of numerous honors and awards, including, an Honorary Doctorate of Laws Degree from West Virginia State University (2008), the National Organization for Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) Community Service Award, Washington D.C. Chapter (2008), a Leadership in Education Award from the American University, Washington Semester Program (2007), the Ringgold High School Lifetime Achievement Award (2007), his selection to the West Virginia State University Alumni Wall of Fame in 2004, his inclusion in the 2001 edition of The Marquis Who's Who in America, the 2000 edition of The Marquis Who's Who in the World, the 2000 North Star Award, presented by The American University, Washington College of Law; the 1999 Distinguished Alumni Award presented by The American University, Washington College of Law; the 1997 Honorable Robert A. Shuker Memorial Award, presented by the Assistant United States Attorneys= Association; the 1993 William H. Hastie Award, presented by the Judicial Council of the National Bar Association; the 1990 County Spotlight Award, presented by the National Association of Counties; the 1990 James R. Waddy Meritorious Service Award, presented by the West Virginia State University National Alumni Association; the Secretary's Award, presented by the Department of Veterans Affairs in 1990; the 1989 H. Carl Moultrie Award, presented by the District of Columbia Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; the Bar Association of the District of Columbia's Young Lawyers Section 1989 Award for Distinguished Service to the Community and the Nation; the 1989 Dean's Award for Distinguished Service to The American University, Washington College of Law; and the United States Department of Justice's Directors Award for Superior Performance as an Assistant United States Attorney in 1980. In addition, April 9, 1991, was declared as Judge Reggie B. Walton Day in the State of Louisiana by the Governor for his contribution to the War on Drugs. Judge Walton was also commissioned as a Kentucky Colonel by Governor Wallace G. Wilkinson in 1990 and 1991, which is the highest civilian honor awarded by the state of Kentucky. Numerous mayors in cities throughout the country have bestowed similar honors on Judge Walton for his work on the nation=s drug problem.

Judge Walton was one of 14 judges profiled in a 1994 book entitled "Black Judges On Justice: Perspectives From The Bench." The book is the first effort to assess the judicial perspectives of prominent African-American judges in the United States.

Judge Walton traveled to Irkutsk, Russia in May 1996 to provide instruction to Russian judges on criminal law subjects in a program funded by the United States Department of Justice and the

American Bar Association's Central and East European Law Initiative Reform Project. Judge Walton is also an instructor in the Harvard University Law School's Advocacy Workshop and a faculty member at the National Judicial College in Reno, Nevada.

Judge Walton has been active in working with the youth of the Washington, D.C. area and throughout the nation. He has served as a Big Brother and frequently speaks at schools throughout the Washington Metropolitan area concerning drugs, crime and personal responsibility.

Judge Walton and his wife are the parents of one daughter.

**For more information on all programs, please visit**  
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