



Evelyn Lundberg Stratton

Evelyn Lundberg Stratton, retired from the Supreme Court of Ohio after 23 years in the judiciary to pursue criminal justice reforms, particularly as they relate to mental health, juveniles, and veterans.

She came to the bench by a very different route. Born to missionary parents in Bangkok, Thailand, Stratton spent her childhood in Southeast Asia. She attended boarding school in South Vietnam at the height of the Vietnam War and later in Malaysia, visiting America on occasion with her parents. At age 18, she returned to America alone with only a few hundred dollars in her pocket. Working her way through school, she earned a Juris Doctor degree from The Ohio State University College of Law.

She began her legal career as a trial lawyer in the courtrooms of Central Ohio. In 1989, she was the first woman to be elected Judge of the Franklin County Common Pleas Court, where she became known as “The Velvet Hammer” for her approach to sentencing in serious felony cases. Her success on the trial bench led to an appointment in 1996 to the Supreme Court of Ohio, where she was elected to a third term in 2008.

Stratton believes that the courts, in partnership with the mental health system, can affect positive change in the lives of many defendants whose mental illness has led to criminal activity. To that end, she formed the Supreme Court of Ohio Advisory Committee on Mental Illness & the Courts, which was composed of mental health, law enforcement and criminal justice professionals who were dedicated to mental health initiatives in the court system. That committee has now merged into the Attorney General Task Force on Mental Illness and Criminal Justice, and she still serves as co-chair along with Attorney General Mike DeWine.

Nationally, Stratton is a co-founder and former co-chair of the Judges’ Leadership Initiative, a professional association that supports cooperative mental health programs in the criminal justice system. Her latest focus in Ohio and nationally is on establishing veterans courts to help those returning veterans with Post Traumatic Stress, Traumatic Brain Injury and other issues, whose problems may lead to involvement in the criminal justice system.

Since retiring from the bench, she works through EStratton Consulting, LLC on criminal justice reforms, particularly focusing on engaging the judges in different states in these reform efforts. She is also Of Counsel to a major Ohio law firm, Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease LLP.

Among her many honors are the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Angels Award, as well as the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services' Adoption Excellence Award.

Additionally, in May 2008, Stratton received an Ellis Island Medal of Honor at a ceremony in New York City. Established in 1986 by the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations, the Ellis Island Medals of Honor pay tribute to American citizens of diverse origins for their outstanding contributions to their communities, their nation and the world. Ranking among the nation's most prestigious awards, recipients are listed in the Congressional Record.

Stratton is the wife of John A. Lundberg III, and the mother of two adult sons. She enjoys painting, Thai cooking, and fly fishing with her husband. But surely her most interesting accomplishment was her first-place finish in a college Stampede Girls Goat Tying Competition — a talent she later put to good use as a trial lawyer.

EMPLOYMENT

2013 - Present - Principal, EStratton Consulting, LLC

2013 - Present - Of Counsel, Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease LLP

1996 - 2012 - Justice, Supreme Court of Ohio

1989 - 1996 - Judge, Court of Common Pleas, Franklin County, Ohio

1985 - 1988 - Principal Partner, Wesp, Osterkamp & Stratton

1979 - 1985 - Associate Attorney, Hamilton, Kramer, Myers & Cheek

EDUCATION

Juris Doctor, The Ohio State University College of Law, Columbus, Ohio, 1978

Bachelor of Arts, History, 1976; Honorary Doctor of Laws, 1998; The University of Akron, Akron, Ohio

Honorary Doctor of Laws, Capital University Law School, Columbus, Ohio, 1999

Honorary Doctorate of Community Leadership, Franklin University, 2013

LeTourneau College, Longview, Texas, 1971-1973, 1974

Associate of Arts, The University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, 1973

Mission Boarding School, Dalat School, Tanah Rata, Malaysia, 1971

BAR ADMISSIONS

Supreme Court of Ohio

United States District Court, Southern District of Ohio, Eastern Division

United States Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit

CURRENT LAW-RELATED MEMBERSHIPS

American Bar Association

Columbus Bar Association (Board of Governors, 1984-1988, 1990-1992)

Columbus Bar Foundation (Board of Trustees, 1986-1991)

Ohio State Bar Association (Council of Delegates, 1992-1996)

Ohio State Bar Foundation (Board of Trustees, 2005-2006)

Women Lawyers of Franklin County

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Author of several law review and other articles on legal issues

Lecturer for Ohio Judicial College and numerous other organizations

TRIAL PRACTICE ASSOCIATIONS

American Arbitration Association, 1979-1988

Association of Trial Lawyers of America, 1985-1988

Columbus Defense Association, 1980-1985

Ohio Association of Civil Trial Attorneys, 1980-1986

Honors

Ohio House of Representatives Commendation for Service, 1984

Ohio Senate Resolution for Service, 2013

COMMON PLEAS JUDGE ASSOCIATIONS

American Inns of Court, 1990-1992 (President, 1991-1992)

Ohio Common Pleas Judges Association, 1989-1996

Ohio Judicial Conference, 1989-1996

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND COURT ADMINISTRATION

Court Officers and Services, Inc. (Honorary Member, 1996-Present)
Franklin County Community Corrections Planning Board (Board of Trustees, 1992-1996)
Franklin University Criminal Justice Advisory Board (2013-Present)
Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections (OJACC) (Board of Trustees, 1995-Present)
Supreme Court/Judicial Conference Committee on Court Security, 1993-2003 (Co-chair, 1993-1999)

Honors

Advisory Committee on Specialized Dockets, Ohio Supreme Court (Certificate of Recognition, 2012)
Crisis Intervention Team (Award, 2006)
Central Ohio Crime Stoppers (Appreciation Award, 2002)
Cleveland Heights Fraternal Order of Police (Judicial Excellence Award, 1996)
Columbus Bar Association/Foundation (Judicial Pro Bono Award, 2012)
Ohio Bail Agents Association (Appreciation Award, 2008)
International Community Corrections Association (Judicial Award, 2010)
Ohio Association for Court Administration (Certificate of Appreciation, 2012)
Ohio Bailiffs and Court Officers Association (Outstanding Achievement Award, 2000; Certificate of Recognition, 2012)
Ohio Community Corrections Association (President's Award, 2003)
Ohio Community Corrections Organization (C.J. McLin Award, 1998)
Ohio Justice Alliance for Community Corrections (James Wichtman Award, 2006)
Ohio Judicial Conference (Thinking Outside the Box Award for Court Security Project, 1999)
United States Marshals Service (Certification of Appreciation For Ohio Court Security Project, 1997)
Women's Political Caucus, Mahoning Valley (Judicial Excellence Award, 2008)

ADOPTION REFORM

Dave Thomas Center for Adoption Law at Capital University (Advisory Board, 1998-2001)
Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption (Board of Trustees, 1996-2008)
League Against Child Abuse (Women's Board, 1989-1994)

National Center for State Courts (Expedited Adoption Committee, Chair, 2000-2003)

National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (The Permanency Planning for Children Committee, 1996-1999)

National Judicial College (Termination and Adoption Planning Committee, 1996)

Honors

Congressional Coalition on Adoption (Angels in Adoption Award, 2001)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Adoption Excellence Award, 2001)

St. Joseph's Orphanage (Scholar of Life Award, 1998)

MENTAL HEALTH REFORMS

Attorney General Task Force on Criminal Justice and Mental Illness (Co-Chair with Attorney General, 2012-Present)

Corporation for Supportive Housing (National Board of Trustees, 2005-2013)

National Judges' Criminal Justice/Mental Health Leadership Initiative (JLI) (2004-Present, Co-Chair, 2004-2008)

Supreme Court of Ohio Advisory Committee on Mental Illness and the Courts (Chair, 2001-2011)

Honors

Delaware Morrow Mental Health and Recovery Service Board (Helping Hands Award, 2006)

Fred Frese Advocacy Award, 2004

Harding-Evans Foundation (Academy for Leadership Award, 2005)

Columbus Area, Inc. (Mental Health Advocate Award, Government Sector, 2011)

National Alliance on Mental Illness, Ohio Chapter (Mental Health Champion Award, 2002)

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (Distinguished Service Award, 2004)

National Alliance on Mental Illness of Geauga County (Certificate of Appreciation, 2008)

National Judges' Criminal Justice/Mental Health Leadership Initiative (JLI) (Special Recognition, 2008)

Nord Center (Distinguished Service Award, 2003)

Ohio Advocates for Mental Health (Elected Official of the Year, 2002; National Mental Health Education/Advocacy Award, 2004)

Mental Health Advocates Award (2011)

Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities (President's Award, 2008)

Ohio Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (Partners in

Justice Angel Award, 2004)

Ohio Department of Mental Health (Award of Appreciation, 2004)

Ohio Psychiatric Society of Central Ohio (Flame Award for Service in Diversion of Patients from Court to Care, 2007)

Ohio Psychological Association (Award of Excellence, 2012)

Southeast Inc. ("Recovery" Award, 2003)

Commonwealth of Kentucky (Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels, 2010)

Tri County Board (Nelson Advocacy Award, 2006)

VETERANS TREATMENT COURT REFORMS

Resurrecting Lives Foundation (Vice Chair, 2011-Present)

Veterans Pro Bono Project, now Ohio Military and Veterans Legal Assistant Project (2011-Present)

Veterans WrapAround Project (Chair, 2010-Present)

Veterans in the Courts Initiative (Chair, 2009-Present)

Honors

AMVETS Past State Department Commanders' Civil Servant of the Year Award, 2013

Ohio National Guard (Certificate of Appreciation, 2011)

Ohio State Association of Veterans' Service Commissions (Outstanding Service Award, 2011)

Ohio Military Reserve Association (Outstanding Service Award, 2008)

The Psychiatric Society of Central Ohio (Award for Treatment Centered Courts for Veterans, 2010)

Vietnam Veterans of America, Buckeye State Council (Veterans Advocacy Award, 2010)

OTHER COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

ArtSafe Foundation/Memorial To Our Lost Children (Board of Trustees, 1997-2003; Advisory Council, 2003-Present)

Columbus Council on World Affairs (Board of Trustees, 1990-1999; Honorary Trustee, 1999-Present)

Prevent Blindness Ohio, 1988-2003 (Chairman of the Board of Trustees, 1999-2001; Honorary Trustee, 2004-Present)

Honors

ArtSafe (Service Award, 2003)

Council of State Governments (Henry Toll Fellow, 2010)

Prevent Blindness America (Award for Volunteer Leadership, 2000)

Prevent Blindness Ohio (People of Vision Award, 2005)

The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law (Alumni Public Service Award, 2002)

The Ohio State Bar Foundation (Public or Government Service Award, 2004)

The University of Akron (Alumni Honor Award, 2000)

AWARDS NAMED AFTER JUSTICE STRATTON

Justice Stratton Award for Court Security, established in 2004 and awarded yearly

Justice Evelyn Stratton CIT Champion of the Year, established in 2012 and awarded yearly

OTHER HONORS

National Ethnic Coalition Organization (Ellis Island Medal of Honor, 2008)

Beta Sigma Phi (Lady of the Year Award, 2007)

LeTourneau Stampede (Girls Goat Tying, 1st Place, 1972)

Outstanding Young Women of America (1983, 1985)

American Biographical Institute, Woman of the Year (1992)

Who's Who of American Women (14th, 15th, 16th, 18th and 21st Editions)

Who's Who in American Law (5th, 6th, 7th, 9th and 11th Editions)

Franklin Church Faith and Freedom Appreciation Award (2013)

LAW REVIEWS & ARTICLES

Stratton, Sprechen sie Deutsch?, The Daily Reporter, Columbus Bar Association Supplement (May 24, 1991)

Stratton, The Myth of the Plea Bargain, Bar Briefs (1992).

Stratton, Letters from Prison, The Daily Reporter, Columbus Bar Association Supplement (Mar. 1992).

Stratton, What the Best Plaintiffs' Attorneys Do: Viewpoint From the Bench, Ohio Trial (Spring 1992) 28.

Stratton, Public Defender- The Unsung Hero, The OACDL Vindicator 9 (Summer 1992).

Stratton, Volunteerism is Alive and Well, Bar Briefs (Dec. 1993) 14.

Stratton, Civil Law and Procedure Committee, For the Record (May/June 1994).

Stratton, Victims You Treat: The Aftermath in Court, An Explanation for the Medical Profession, Bar Briefs (Mar. 1995).

Stratton, Courts Are Not Truly Open Unless They Are Also Secure, Bar Briefs (Mar. 1995).

Stratton, Practical Tips for Trial Judges, The Whole Truth, Vol. 2, Issue 1 (Winter 1998) 5.

Stratton, Contrasts, 61 Albany L.Rev. 1573 (1998).

Stratton, Striking A Balance: The Robinette Case, Ohio Police, Vol. 45, No. 1 (Summer 1998) 34.

Stratton, Expediting the Adoption Process at the Appellate Level, 28 Cap.U.L.Rev. 121 (1999).

Stratton, Justice Mom and Her Flowers, Success Briefs for Lawyers: Inspirational Insights on How to Succeed at Law and Life (2001) 7.

Stratton, Blough, and Hawk, Solutions for the Mentally Ill in the Criminal Justice System, American Jails (Jan./Feb. 2004).

Stratton, Solutions for the Mentally Ill in the Criminal Justice System: A Symposium Introduction, 32 Cap.U.L.Rev. 901 (2004).

Stratton, Rediscovering Recovery, NAMI Ohio's News Briefs, Vol. 27, No. 1 (Spring 2007) 4.

Stratton and Hawk, Attorney Discipline and Mental Health Issues: A View from the Bench, Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Journal (Nov. 2011) 30.

Stratton and Lagarce, Restoring Honor: Inside Veterans' Courts, Ohio Lawyer, Vol. 26, No. 2 (Mar./Apr. 2012) 9.

Stratton and Lagarce, Veterans WrapAround Project, Ohio Lawyer, Vol. 26, No. 6 (Nov./Dec. 2012) 24.

PERSONAL

Birthplace: Bangkok, Thailand (parents were American Missionaries)

Family: Husband, John A. Lundberg, III; two adult sons

CONTACT INFORMATION

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