



Superior Court Judge Ola M. Lewis

Judge Lewis grew up in Spring Lake, North Carolina but later moved to Brunswick County with her family. She graduated from Fayetteville State University and North Carolina Central Law School graduating with a juris doctorate. Judge Lewis worked in private practice with Dan Blue who at that time was the North Carolina Speaker of the House.

She served as assistant district attorney after returning home to Brunswick County and was soon appointed district court judge. Judge Lewis was the youngest judge serving at that time in the state of North Carolina. After seven years in this role, the former Governor Jim Hunt appointed her to serve as a special Superior Court judge which included serving 21 counties.

Judge Lewis is the longest serving female judge in the history of North Carolina. Her years of service include special Superior Court judge, resident Superior Court judge and senior resident Superior Court judge. She remained on the bench until her death, December 29, 2019.

*“During her time as judge, she fostered the county's drug treatment court, helping hundreds of residents find sobriety and reduce inmate population and costs. Her drug court program created a national template that has since been used in other effective drug court programs throughout the United States. In 2017, she began the Brunswick County Opioid Addiction Task Force with Sheriff John Ingram. The task force's charge was to raise awareness about opioids' negative impacts on people, families and communities. In this role, Judge Ola encouraged Gov. Roy Cooper to declare the opioid addiction crisis a statewide public health emergency.”*

Judge Lewis received many distinguished awards for her work and dedication:

2018 – Governor Cooper awarded her the *Order of the Long Leaf Pine*.

2017 – North Carolina Attorney General Josh Stein presented her the *Dogwood Award*.

2010 – Former Governor Beverly Perdue awarded her the *Old North State Award*.

*“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness.’*

Matthew 25:21(NIV)