

## BIOGRAPHY

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### HON. CHERYL LYNNE AUSTIN

P.O. Box 311, Norristown, PA 19404-0311 (610) 278-3696

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Abington, PA resident Cheryl Lynne Austin considers herself a career public servant. Her election as the first female African-American on the Montgomery County Common Pleas Court in November 2011 is the capstone of her career. Prior to the election, she was an attorney practicing elder law, criminal defense and estate resolution. Before entering private practice, Judge Austin served as Assistant Solicitor and Assistant District Attorney for Montgomery County, where she prosecuted individuals charged with felony and white collar crimes. Judge Austin also served as an adjunct professor at Palmer Theological Seminary in Wynnewood, PA.

While an undergraduate student at Northwestern University, Judge Austin entered the Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps in its first class of women. Upon graduation from Northwestern University, she was commissioned an officer in the U.S. Navy. Judge Austin retired as a U.S. Navy Captain in 2004, after 24 years of active duty and reserve service. She attended Capital University Law School in Columbus, Ohio at night, while working as Human Resources Director for the Ohio Secretary of State.

Judge Austin has been recognized by the American Business Women's Association as an "Outstanding Business Woman" and was named a "Rising Star" among Elder Law attorneys by Philadelphia Magazine. The Legal Intelligencer awarded Judge Austin its "2012 Woman of the Year" award. She was also featured in the PA Commission on Women-sponsored book Voices. Her charitable activities within the Montgomery County, PA community have been acknowledged by the PA Human Relations Commission, the Montgomery County Black Law Enforcement Officers Association, the Willow Grove NAACP and the Cheltenham, PA NAACP branch, which she co-founded.

Founding co-chair of the Montgomery Bar Association Diversity Committee, Judge Austin also co-chaired the Pennsylvania Bar Association Military and Veterans Affairs Committee. Before assuming the bench, she was an Advisory Board member of Laurel House, a social service agency assisting victims of domestic violence, and a Trustee of the Montgomery County Community College. Judge Austin formerly chaired the Montgomery County Commission on Women and Families.

Since joining the bench, Judge Austin has presided over several divisions within the Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas general jurisdiction. Judge Austin currently hears cases within the Orphans Court Division.