

## The Honorable Celeste F. Bremer - 2014 winner of the Cristine Wilson Medal for Equality and Justice



Chief U.S. Magistrate Judge Celeste F. Bremer was appointed to serve the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Iowa in 1985. She is a 1974 graduate of St. Ambrose College, a 1977 graduate of the University of Iowa College of Law, and received her Doctorate in Adult Education in 2002 from Drake University. She is admitted to practice in Iowa and California. Prior to her appointment on the federal bench, she was an Assistant Scott County Attorney; a partner in a law firm in Davenport, Iowa; an Assistant Iowa Attorney General; and corporate counsel for Deere & Co. and Economy Forms Corporation. While serving as a judge, she has taught classes at Drake University Law School, Drake University School of Education, Simpson College, Kaplan University, has served as Interim Director of Drake Law School's LLM Program, and regularly teaches mediation for judges at the Federal Judicial Center. Additionally, she presents continuing education programs for judges and lawyers on civil litigation topics and legal ethics. She has been invited to design programs covering mediation, Rule of Law, and judicial education for courts in Krakow, Kuala Lumpur, Bangalore, and Tunisia. Her work as a U.S. Magistrate Judge includes trials of civil cases, case management of all phases of litigation, civil case mediations, preliminary criminal case hearings, and she specializes in complex case litigation. She was appointed by the Chief Justice to serve as a member of the Judicial Conference of the U.S. Space and Facilities Committee, and was the court's liaison for all district construction projects for over a decade.

Early in her career, Judge Bremer became interested in the judicial selection process in Iowa, first as an applicant, then as a Merit Selection Commissioner, and served in 1987 as Chair of the Iowa Supreme Court Council on Judicial Selection. This Council, in conjunction with the American Judicature Society, published *The Handbook for Iowa Judicial Nominating Commissioners*, which is still in use today. Judge Bremer conducts training for Iowa Merit Selection Commissioners, helping them select an organizational system, and identify the qualifications for judicial nominees. Judge Bremer serves as a mentor to all judicial applicants, helping them navigate the judicial selection process in state and federal courts. She served as a member of the Eighth Circuit Gender Fairness Task Force in 1994, and continues to implement their recommendations to ensure that justice is not only done, it is seen to be done.

She is a member of the Infinity Project, whose mission is to increase gender diversity on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit. She helped organize education programs for applicants, the public, lawyers, and anyone interested in getting women "in the pipeline" for appointment to appellate courts, while calling attention to the need for transparency in judicial appointment processes. She shines a light on the process and results, and asks "where are the females?" at every step along the way. She believes

that a democratic society demands full participation of all of its members, and seeks to remove any barriers to full participation by qualified attorneys in the judicial branch of government, particularly those who have historically been excluded from service on the bench.

Judge Bremer is a member of the Iowa Bar Association, the Federal Magistrate Judges Association, the American Bar Association, the National Association of Women Judges, the American Institute of Architects (Affiliate Member), the Iowa Organization of Women Attorneys (recipient of the Belle Mansfield Award in 2003), the Polk County Bar Association, Polk County Women Attorneys (2014 recipient of the Willie Glanton Award), the C. Edwin Moore Inn of Court, and was a founder of the Dillon Inn of Court in Scott County, Iowa.