



In April's edition of *Advocate*, the Polokwane bar's Nathi Gaisa spoke to two women lawyers recently promoted to senior positions in the Limpopo Division of the High Court. In this edition, Gaisa spoke to its deputy judge president Fikile Mokgohloa, to President of the Limpopo Regional Division of the Magistrates Court Jakkie Wessels and to the bar's Ntombizanele Ndlokovane who has recently acted as a judge.

Other Polokwane news is that DJP Mokgohloa has been appointed to act at the Supreme Court of Appeal. Judge AML Phatudi will act as deputy judge president while she is in Bloemfontein.



JUDGE FE MOKGOHLOA

Judge Fikile Mokgohloa was appointed Deputy Judge President of the Polokwane Division of the High Court in 2016.

She started her legal career in 1990 as a candidate attorney after obtaining her LLB degree. Judge Mokgohloa obtained a B.Juris in 1987 and an LLB in 1990 from the University of the North West and practised as an attorney before being elevated to the bench. She spent almost a decade as a judge in the KwaZulu-Natal Division of the High Court, before moving to the Limpopo bench in 2016.

"As a lawyer, one always aspires to be in the highest office," she says.

The Pretoria born Deputy Judge President is a Christian and a lover of cars. "I actually buy car magazines," she says.

"I enjoy reading. At the moment I am currently reading *My Vision: Challenge in the race for Excellence*, written by Mohamed binRashid Al Maktoum," she says.

The Deputy Judge President appears to be one who prefers to talk less, but is big on action, providing real-life solutions. She is patient and very approachable, always fair, ready to listen and assist both practitioners and members of the public.



MS JAKKIE WESSELS

Regional Court President Jakkie Wessels started her career as a prosecutor in Pretoria and was appointed a district court Magistrate for two years, before deciding to leave.

"I left to go back to university in 1993 where I studied further and during that time I also worked at UNISA Law Faculty, before I got appointed at Justice College in the civil judicial training section in 1998," she says.

Ms Wessels studied at the University of Pretoria completing various qualifications including BLuris, BProc, LLB, BA Honours Afr & Literary Theory, and further went to UNISA to acquire her Certificate Constitutional Litigation, LLM.

"I am very passionate about the law in general, though constitutional law - and in particular administrative justice - is a special area of interest. I was part of the Cybercrime Bill task team and involved with training on cybercrime, so that is my current special area of interest."

Ms Wessels says that the drafting and quality of civil pleadings had "improved vastly over the last few years in the regional court since we got civil jurisdiction".

"Being on time at court, prepared and having properly consulted still seems to be a challenge at times," she lists as some of the challenges she has faced.

"It is necessary that we all be true professionals, well-prepared and committed to ensure that court time is optimally utilized and that unnecessary delays be avoided so that cases can be finalized".

Advocate NTOMBIZANELE NDLOKOVANE

Ntombizanele Ndlokovane was born in Beaufort-West in the Western Cape where she matriculated. She later obtained several degrees and diplomas, namely: B.Juris

(1996) from the University of the Western Cape (UWC), LLB (2003) from UWC, and LLM (2007) from UNISA.

Ndlokovane says that, despite a very progressive Constitution, there are still some challenges for women in law. "So it is up to women like myself to claim those rights by making ourselves available when opportunities to act on the bench arises," says Ndlokovane.

She says women in law "have to take control of their own lives: by remaining relevant to the profession" and must acquire the skills to prepare them for judicial appointments. They must "fight back when necessary and be more assertive as nobody else is going to do that on their behalf".

Ndlokovane says it is vital that measures are put in place to alleviate the financial obstacles facing many women and black junior members when joining the Bar. Traditional briefing patterns also need to change, so that "the transferring of skills to junior members, specifically women and black members, is not on paper only but becomes a reality". **A**

Getting it right: In April's edition of *Advocate*, we incorrectly used a photo of Deputy Judge President Mokgohloa in an article about Judge Mmatsaro Semanya. We regret the error and apologise unreservedly to the Deputy Judge President and Judge Semanya.



Judge Mmatsaro Semanya