

Lumala I Estoria-ta (History Comes Alive): 75 Years of the District Court of Guam

Lumala I Estoria-ta, meaning “History Comes Alive,” is the theme for Guam’s celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the Organic Act of Guam. In keeping with this theme, we highlight the District Court of Guam’s historical milestones, which reflect a legacy shaped by its jurisdictional authority, leadership, and the spaces in which justice was carried out in the last 75 years.

the earliest practicable date.” On August 1, 1950, a civil government of Guam became a reality with the passage of the Organic Act of Guam (Pub.L. 81-630, codified at 48 U.S.C. § 1421 et seq. (1950)).

The Organic Act of Guam created a territorial court, the District Court of Guam, and vested it with original jurisdiction over cases arising under federal law and cases not

the Organic Act to require that appeals to the District Court of Guam be heard by an appellate division consisting of three judges.

In 1974, the Guam Legislature created the Superior Court of Guam to replace the existing local court structure. Thus, beginning in 1974, the local courts exercised exclusive original jurisdiction over cases arising under local Guam (except cases also arising under federal law or related to Guam territorial income tax). As a result, the District Court of Guam was divested of original jurisdiction over cases arising under local law. Finally, upon the establishment of the Supreme Court of Guam in 1994 through the passage of the Frank G. Lujan Memorial Court Reorganization Act, the District Court of Guam was divested of appellate jurisdiction over all local matters.

Today, as a result of the above amendments to the Organic Act of Guam, the District Court of Guam exercises exclusive federal jurisdiction. It has the same jurisdiction as that of any Article III district court of the United States, to include federal question and diversity jurisdiction. In addition, the District Court of Guam has the jurisdiction of a United States bankruptcy court and acts as Guam’s tax court.

The Court’s Judicial Officers District/Chief Judges

The first judge appointed to the District Court under the Organic Act was **Paul D. Shriver**, a native of Colorado. A hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee was held on Shriver’s nomination on February 27, 1951. The first unpublished transcript of



President Harry S. Truman signing the Organic Act, creating the District Court of Guam.

The Organic Act of Guam and the Authority of the Court

The establishment of a civil government in Guam was envisioned by President Harry S. Truman, who stated: “It is the announced aim of this Government to accord civil government and a full measure of civil rights to the inhabitants of its Pacific territories. The accomplishment of this objective will be furthered by the transfer of these territories to civilian administration and the enactment of organic legislation at

transferred by the Guam Legislature to local courts, as well as appellate jurisdiction as to be determined by the Guam Legislature. Congress later expanded the court’s jurisdiction to include diversity jurisdiction. Shortly after the enactment of the Organic Act, the Guam Legislature created its local court system. It also granted the District Court appellate jurisdiction over certain civil and criminal decisions coming out of the local court. In 1958, Congress approved of such local law by amending

the hearing indicates that Shriver worked in government in Washington, D.C. and Colorado prior to World War II. He served in Italy with the Military Government Division during World War II, and for approximately four years prior



Chief Judge Paul Shriver, with United States Marshal Antonio C. Baza and United States Attorney, H. Gordon Homme, Jr.

to the appointment to the District Court judgeship in Guam, he served in the Philippines as General Counsel for the Philippine War Damage Commission. Shriver served two eight-year terms as the District Judge for Guam. He was re-nominated by President John F. Kennedy after Judge Eugene R. Gilmartin died in office in 1961. Court records show his second term began in March of 1961 and terminated with the court in September 1969.

Eugene R. Gilmartin of Rhode Island succeeded Judge Shriver in 1959. After his appointment by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Gilmartin's nomination hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee took place on August 19, 1959. The unpublished transcript of the nomination hearing indicates that Gilmartin had been serving as the District Judge of Guam under a recess appointment

that began on October 17, 1958. Prior to that appointment, Gilmartin had served as the Deputy High Commissioner of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands for 17 months. Before that, Gilmartin served in a variety of private practice and government positions in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Washington, D.C. Judge Gilmartin died in office in 1961.



ASSUMES JUDGESHIP — Eugene R. Gilmartin, right, former deputy high commissioner of the U.S. Pacific Trust Territories, is shown being sworn in as Judge of the District Court of Guam by Island Court Judge Jose C. Manibusan. The oath taking ceremony took place in the court chamber yesterday morning. Judge Gilmartin replaces Judge Paul D. Shriver who held the post for eight years.

Guam Daily News, Saturday, October 18, 1958, Page 1.

service positions prior to being appointed to the federal bench, serving as Assistant Attorney General of Guam, Director of the Guam Department of Land Management, and Judge of the Island Court of Guam from 1960-1969. Judge Duenas passed away on February 14, 2010, after a long and distinguished judicial career.



NEWLY APPOINTED U.S. DISTRICT COURT Judge Cristobal Camacho Duenas poses with members of his family after being sworn into office Wednesday afternoon. Front row, from left, are his daughter Therese, sister Maria, his mother-in-law Mrs. Vicente Calvo (partly hidden), son Christopher, daughter Zerlina (in front of Christopher), sister Eliza, mother Concepcion, sister Isabel (partly hidden), sister Estella, son Ricardo, Judge Duenas, sister Carmen, wife Juanita holding son David, daughter Joanna (in front of her mother), First Lady Lourdes Camacho and Governor Carlos G. Camacho, and the Judge's son Vincent (in front of the island's First Couple). In back row, same order, are the judge's brother Jose C. Duenas Jr., brother-in-law Tomas Mendiolá (husband of Isabel), Msgr. Felixberto C. Flores, nephew Luis, brother-in-law Frank D. Perez (husband of Carmen), brother-in-law Bernabe Paulino (husband of Estella) and father-in-law Vicente Calvo. (Guam Police Photo)

Guam Daily News, Sunday, December 28, 1969, Page 16.

Cristobal C. Duenas, a 1952 graduate of the University of Michigan Law School, was appointed by President Richard M. Nixon on September 23, 1969, to be the next judge for the District Court of Guam. On December 10, 1969, he was confirmed by the Senate and commissioned the next day. By December 24, 1969, he was officially sworn in as the Judge of the District Court of Guam, and became the first Chamoru federal judge in the nation. In June of 1977, Judge Duenas was reappointed for a second term by President Jimmy Carter, and he retired as a Senior Judge in 1991. Admitted to the Guam bar in 1953, he held various public

President George H.W. Bush nominated **John Sablan Unpingco** to be the next judge for the District Court of Guam. The Senate confirmed the Presidential nomination on September 24, 1992 and the nominee was commissioned on October 9, 1992. Judge Unpingco received a Master of Laws degree, specializing in International Law, from Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.; Master of Business Administration and Juris Doctorate from New York University, New York City; Bachelor of Arts, magna cum laude from St. Louis University, St. Louis, Missouri. Prior to serving on the bench, Judge Unpingco served as U.S. Air Force Judge Advocate General, Command Counsel, Naval Warfare Center in China Lake,

California. Judge Unpingco spearheaded the building of the current courthouse and advocated for the creation of a full-time Magistrate Judge position. He resigned from office effective April 30, 2004, after serving 11 years with the court. Judge Unpingco passed away on October 11, 2023.

County Prosecutor's Office in Kansas City, Missouri from 1988-1990. She was appointed Chief Prosecutor at the Guam Office of the Attorney General from 1990-1994. Frances Tydingco-Gatewood served as a trial judge in the Superior Court from 1994-2002, becoming Guam's first female judge of CHamoru and Pohnpeian descent. She served as an Associate Justice in the Supreme Court from 2002-2006. She is the past President of the Pacific Judicial Council, an organization dedicated to the mission of educating judicial officers and stakeholders in the Pacific region. Chief Judge Tydingco-Gatewood has lectured in American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Palau, the Solomon Islands, and the United States Virgin Islands, on various areas of the law. To date, Chief Judge Tydingco-Gatewood has sat as a judicial officer for more than 30 years.

Ridgecrest man will take Guam judgeship

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush has chosen John S. Unpingco of Ridgecrest, Calif. to be judge of the District Court of Guam for 10 years. If confirmed by the Senate, Unpingco would succeed

Christobal C. Ducenas. Unpingco is deputy counsel for the Office of Counsel at the Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division. He was born in Barrigada, Guam.

Desert Dispatch (Barstow, California), Monday, July 27, 1992, Page 3

Chief Judge **Frances Marie Tydingco-Gatewood** was nominated in 2006 by President George W. Bush and confirmed by the United States Senate as the nation's first female federal judge of CHamoru and Pohnpeian descent. Frances Tydingco-Gatewood began her law career as the Law Clerk for the Honorable Forest W. Hanna, Presiding Judge of the Jackson County Circuit Court in Kansas City, Missouri from 1983-1984 after receiving her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1980 from Marquette University and receiving her Juris Doctor from the University of Missouri – Kansas City School of Law in 1983. She was Guam's first female prosecutor of CHamoru and Pohnpeian descent at the Guam Office of the Attorney General from 1984-1988. She later went on to be an Assistant Prosecutor, trial team leader for the Sex Crimes Unit in the Jackson

Tydingco-Gatewood sworn in

By Steve Lintano
Pacific Daily News
slintano@pacificnews.com

Chief Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood, who was sworn in during a ceremony yesterday morning in the courtroom of the District Court of Guam, said she would like to strengthen the relationship between the federal and local court systems on Guam, including leading the court system and the transition of just take focus to reach diverse litigants and actual problems.

"I want the people of Guam to know that the District Court of Guam is a public entity committed to providing public service. And, we will do our best as a public servant to provide judicial public service for all," she said, during a speech after she was sworn in by Chief Judge Mary Schreiber of the 9th U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

She thanked God, "for her new role, described her as a role model, saying her legal experience made it clear she should be given

NEW FEDERAL CHIEF JUDGE
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Historic day: Supreme Court Associate Justice Robert Torres leaves former federal judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood, after presiding in resolution and prayer from Guam's local courts. For more photos of the event, visit the Pacific Daily News photo gallery at www.pacificnews.com.

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Pacific Daily News, Tuesday, October 31, 2006, Page 2

Manibusan sworn in as federal magistrate

New position: Eileen Bordallo Manibusan, left, holds the Bible as her husband, Judge Joaquin Manibusan, is sworn in yesterday as the U.S. District Court of Guam's new federal magistrate. Manibusan recently resigned as a Superior Court of Guam judge, and begins his duties at the district court on Monday.

Brian Forde/Pacific Daily News/tdurda@guampdn.com

Pacific Daily News, Saturday, February 7, 2004, Page 4

2020.

The Honorable **Michael J. Bordallo** began his term as a full time United States Magistrate Judge for the District Court of Guam on February 14, 2020. Judge Bordallo received a Bachelor of Business Administration in 1983 and a Juris Doctor in 1987 from the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana. He brought 22 years of judicial experience to the court, having sat as a trial court judge for the Superior

Local

Bordallo sworn in



A ceremony was held for the investiture of U. S. Magistrate Judge Michael J. Bordallo on Friday at the U.S. District Court. From left, Bordallo, his wife, Carla Bordallo, and Chief Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE U.S. DISTRICT COURT

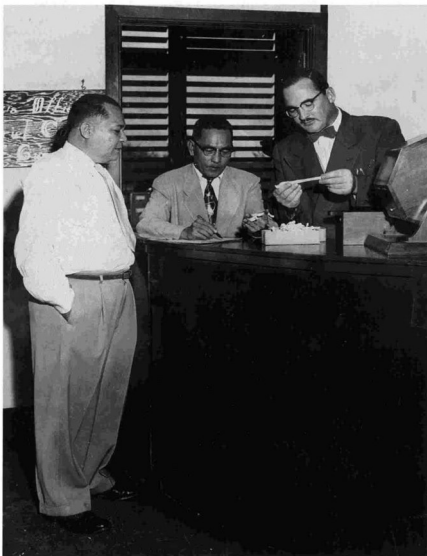
Pacific Daily News, Sunday, February 16, 2020, Page A5

Court of Guam since March of 1998. **The First Executives**

The first United States Attorney for the District of Guam was **James G. Mackey**. His name appears on court documents filed in early 1951. The first United States Marshal for Guam was **Antonio C. Baza**, a native of

Guam who had a long and illustrious career in law enforcement on the island. Marshal Baza's name appears on court documents from early 1951 through most of 1965.

The first Clerk of Court for the District of Guam was **Roland A. Gillette**, appointed by Judge Shriver in 1950. He served in that capacity until 1962. Prior to joining the District Court of Guam, Mr. Gillette served as a clerk in the county court system in Denver, Colorado. While living on Guam, his wife Katherine Hall Gillette became the Superintendent of Nurses at the Guam Memorial Hospital. Records show that



Roland A. Gillette (left), the first Clerk of Court, selecting the first jury panel with U.S. Marshal Antonio C. Baza (right) and Jesus A. Crisostomo looking on.

Mr. Gillette was employed by the county court in Denver after his service at the District Court of Guam.

The first United State Probation Officer for the District Court of Guam was **Frank Michael Cruz**, who was appointed by Judge Cristobal C. Duenas on June 19, 1978. On November 12, 1982, Mr. Cruz was appointed as the first Chief U.S. Probation Officer by Judge Duenas. Prior to his appointment, probation and pretrial services were

provided by the Superior Court of Guam. With the inception of the Guam probation office in 1978, services were also provided to the District Court of the Northern Mariana Islands on a limited basis.

The first Federal Public Defender was Attorney **Robert M. Hartsock**, who was appointed by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in 2001. Prior to his appointment, the district's federal public defender services were handled by the Federal Public Defender's Office for the District of Hawaii, where Mr. Hartsock served as an Assistant Federal Public Defender and provided representation in Guam.

Court Locations Through the Years

The Guam Congress Building, located in Hagåtña, Guam, served as the venue for the District Court of Guam from 1950 to 1968. Our court's first jury trial commenced on February 21, 1956, for criminal case number 37-55, *Government of Guam vs. John L. Hilton and Richard C. Harris*. The defendants were charged with burglary in the first degree in an information that was filed on October 25, 1955. The jury acquitted the defendants that very same day. Mr. Richard Rosenberry, the Deputy Island



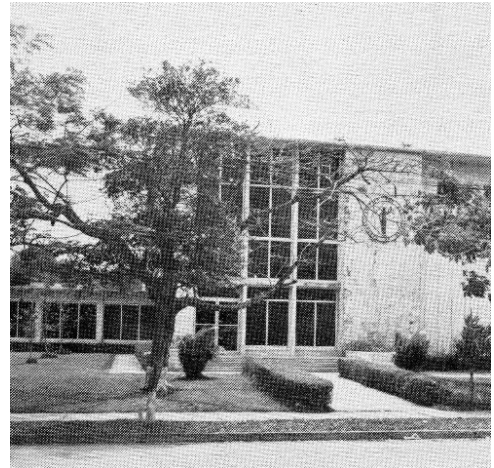
Guam Congress Building, Hagåtña.

Attorney, prosecuted the case, while Mr. Finton J. Phelan, Jr., was counsel of record for the defendants.

The Courthouse of Guam, located in Hagåtña, served as the home of the District Court of Guam from

1968 to 1974.

In 1974, the District Court of Guam moved into the sixth floor of the Pacific News Building in Hagåtña, where we held court until our current courthouse was built in 2000.



The second home of the District Court of Guam, the Guam Courthouse.

The District Court of Guam moved into its current location on West Soledad Avenue, along Marine Corps Drive, and officially opened its doors in



U.S. Courthouse, along Marine Corp Drive, Hagåtña

July 2000, under the leadership of the late Chief Judge John S. Unpingco.

Other Historical Highlights

In 1978, Congress passed the Bankruptcy Reform Act of 1978, Pub. L. No. 95-598, 92 Stat. 2549, which significantly restructured the nation's bankruptcy laws and created the modern Bankruptcy Code. Section 335(a) of the Act amended the Organic Act of Guam, expressly granting bankruptcy jurisdiction to the District Court of Guam effective 1979. Bankruptcy Judge

Jon J. Chinen from the District of Hawaii presided over bankruptcy cases in the District Court of Guam until early in 1982, when Chief Judge Cristobal Dueñas assumed that duty.

In 2003, **John Gorman** was appointed by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals as the next Federal Public Defender for Guam. Originally from New York, Gorman received his bachelor's degree from Drake University in Iowa in 1980 and received his juris doctor from Northeastern University in 1992. He joined the Office of the Federal Public Defender in Guam as a senior litigator in 1997.

Assistant Federal Public Defender **Leilani Lujan** was appointed by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals to be the first female Federal Public Defender for the District of Guam in November, 2023 and formally sworn into office in January, 2024. Lujan served as an assistant federal public defender in Guam since 2013.

On October 9, 1997, the Honorable Alex R. Munson, Chief Judge of the District Court of the Northern Mariana Islands, advocated for the establishment of a permanent full-time probation officer in his district. As a result, in 1998, the Guam Probation

office opened an office in the District of the Northern Mariana Islands with the appointment of a probation officer from that district.

When it first opened its doors, the U.S. Probation Office was manned by just Chief Cruz and Mrs. Flora Garrido McIntosh, who was hired as a Probation Clerk. Today, the office

Eugene R. Gilmartin, Guam District Judge

GUAM (AP) — District Judge Eugene R. Gilmartin, 58, formerly of Providence, R. I., died at the Naval hospital here today after a heart attack.

Gilmartin, the Second District judge to be appointed to Guam, was appointed by former President Eisenhower to an eight-year term in August 1958.

Gilmartin served as deputy high commissioner of the Pacific Trust Territory before assuming her judgeship.

He was a 1928 graduate of the Georgetown University School of Law, Washington, D.C.

Gilmartin is survived by his widow, a son, Richard, and a daughter, Mrs. Chester Davis, whose husband is attached to the U. S. Embassy in Jordan.

Newport Daily News, Sat, Mar 04, 1961 · Page 2

Paul Shriver Tapped For Guam Judgeship

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Kennedy announced Friday he will appoint Paul Shriver of Denver as judge of the District Court of Guam for an eight-year term. Shriver will succeed the late Judge Eugene R. Gilmartin.

Shriver was judge of the District Court for Guam from 1950 to 1958.

Shriver, 61, a native of Salem, Ohio, is a veteran of government service. For the past year, he was a consultant for the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs.

Judge Shriver, born and reared in Salem, was the son of the late George and Mary Shriver. He is a nephew of Mrs. Nettie Shriver of W. State St.

The Salem News (Salem, Ohio) · Sat, Sep 9, 1961 · Page 1



NEW CITIZENS: Ninety-eight new citizens pose with District Court Judge Paul D. Shriver (in black robe, center) and High Commissioner Delmas H. Nucker (white suit, center) following ceremony at which they were naturalized. Of the 98, 74 were Philippine nationals. Five among the group declined to take the oath to take up arms for the United

States and were sworn in separately. Other countries represented were Japan, Brazil, Poland, Germany, Canada, Australia, Korea, China, and the islands of Saipan, Palau, Samoa, Rota, Yap, Ponape, Truk and Okinawa. Nucker addressed the group after the ceremony.

The Territorial Sun News and Views of the Marianas, Sunday, April 27, 1958, Page 16



From L-R: Judge Joaquin C. Perez, Unknown, Harold W. Burnett, High Court of Trust Territory; Robert K. Shoecraft, Judge, High Court of the Trust Territory; Paul D. Shriver, Judge, District Court of Guam; and Judge Cristobal C. Dueñas, Island Court of Guam.



The District Court of Guam's first jury trial commenced on February 21, 1956. The first jurors are shown here: Back row, left to right: Eliseo Escares Maravilla, Jesus Martinez Perez, Ricardo Torres Calvo, Gladys Victoria Bennett, Antonio L.G. Perez, and Asuncion H. Santos. Front row, right to left: Irby John Baker, Yuk Lan Moylan, Francisco B. Perez, Lois F. Statler, Kenneth Hodges, and Vicente Calvo Aflague.

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Paul Shriver Will Stop in Colorado on His Way to Guam

By GEO. SANFORD HOLMES
 Washington, Oct. 2—It has required two appointments by President Truman to make Paul D. Shriver, well known Colorado attorney and political figure, the first federal judge of the island of Guam.

Now that Shriver has been given a recess appointment and has been sworn in by no less a personage than Attorney General McGrath, he is leaving Tuesday, Oct. 3, for Denver, thence to San Francisco, and from there to Hawaii and Guam. He will spend some time in each of these stops enroute, in order to study federal court procedure before organizing his own court on the far-distant Pacific possession.

Judge Shriver also plans to stop off at Grand Junction and see his old friend, Walter Walker, before proceeding to the coast.

The reason it took two shots at the nomination to make it stick is because congress recessed before the first nomination could be confirmed. However, when congress finally recessed for not more than 30 days, all nominations still unacted upon were automatically re-

turned to the White House. The president then named Paul for a recess appointment and he can now fulfill the duties of the job pending confirmation when congress re-convenes.

Chairman McCarran, of the senate judiciary committee, has informed this reporter that no objections have been filed against Shriver and that in all probability, he will not be required to return to Washington when the nomination comes before the senate again.

Judge Shriver, former WPA state director, military government official in Italy and more recently, counsel for the Philippines War Damage commission, will spend ten days in Denver. Mrs. Shriver and her mother will remain in Denver. Later, Mrs. Shriver will join her husband in Guam.

SAVE UP TO 40% in FUEL BILLS

The Daily Sentinel (Grand Junction, Colorado), Monday, October 2, 1950, Page 5.

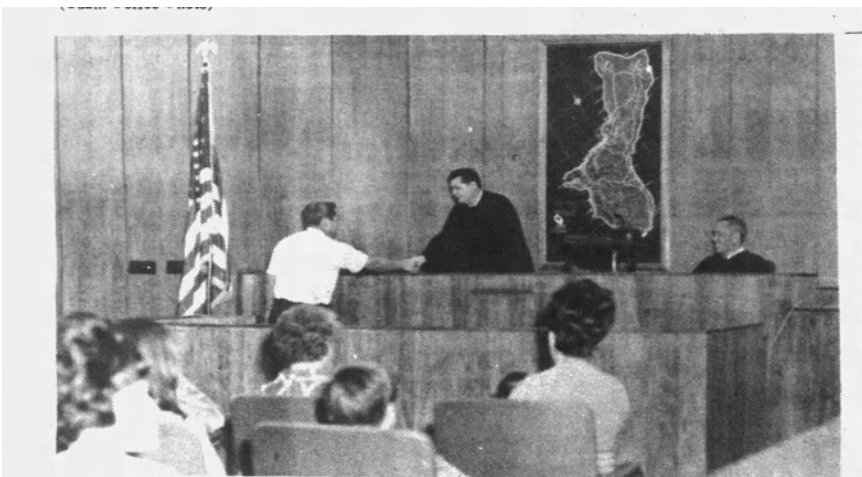


AFTER OATH TAKING: Guam District Court Judge Eugene R. Gilmartin, third from left, is shown with his family in the White House cabinet room after he was sworn in recently by Robert K. Gray, third from right, secretary to the cabinet. Left to right, Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Gilmartin Jr., Gilmartin and Mrs. Gilmartin, Gray, and Mr. and Mrs. Chester Davis. Mrs. Davis is the judge's daughter.

The Territorial Sun News and Views of the Marianas, Sunday, September 27, 1959, Page 2.



The court's second judge, Eugene R. Gilmartin (second from left), celebrating with staff members.



GOVERNOR CARLOS G. CAMACHO congratulates U.S. District Court Judge Cristobal C. Duenas after being sworn in a private ceremony Wednesday afternoon in the court's chamber. Witnessing the ceremony, in the foreground, were members of the judge's family as well as Island Court Judge Vicente C. Reyes, shown at right. (Guam Police Photo)

Guam Daily News, Sunday, December 28, 1969, Page 16.



Judge Cristobal Duenas, leaving the bench.



Judge Cristobal Duenas at his retirement party, 1989, with court staff members Flora McIntosh, Joselyn P. Camacho, Priscilla Quichocho, and Wanda Miles.

Judge Duenas Sworn In As Federal Judge



NEWLY APPOINTED U.S. DISTRICT COURT Judge Cristobal Camacho Duenas poses with members of his family after being sworn into office Wednesday afternoon. Front row, from left, are his daughter Therese, sister Maria, his mother-in-law Mrs. Vicente Calvo (partly hidden), son Christopher, daughter Zerlina (in front of Christopher), sister Eliza, mother Concepcion, sister Isabel (partly hidden), sister Estella, son Ricardo, Judge Duenas, sister Carmen, wife Juanita holding son David, daughter Joanna (in front of her mother), First Lady Lourdes Camacho and Governor Carlos G. Camacho, and the Judge's son Vincent (in front of the Island's First Couple). In back row, same order, are the judge's brother Jose C. Duenas Jr., brother-in-law Tomas Mendiola (husband of Isabel), Msgr. Felixberto C. Flores, nephew Luis, brother-in-law Frank D. Perez (husband of Carmen), brother-in-law Bernabe Paulino (husband of Estella) and father-in-law Vicente Calvo. (Guam Police Photo)



GOVERNOR CARLOS G. CAMACHO congratulates U.S. District Court Judge Cristobal C. Duenas after being sworn in a private ceremony Wednesday afternoon in the court's chamber. Witnessing the ceremony, in the foreground, were members of the judge's family as well as Island Court Judge Vicente C. Reyes, shown at right. (Guam Police Photo)



NEWLY APPOINTED U.S. DISTRICT COURT JUDGE Cristobal C. Duenas is shown with Msgr. Felixberto C. Flores, left, and Governor Carlos G. Camacho after the swearing-in ceremony Wednesday afternoon. Both the Monsignor and the Governor are first cousins of Judge Duenas, the first Guamanian jurist ever to be elevated to the prestigious federal bench. Msgr. Flores, apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Agaña, and Judge Duenas attended Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, for two years, beginning in 1946. (Guam Police Photo)

In a private ceremony attended by members of his family, Judge Cristobal Camacho Duenas was sworn in Wednesday afternoon as the first Guamanian judge of the U.S. District Court of Guam.

His oath of office was administered by Island Court Judge Paul J. Abatie, in the presence of Governor and Mrs. Carlos G. Camacho, his wife Juanita, his mother Concepcion, Msgr. Felixberto C. Flores, and Island Court Judge Vicente C. Reyes.

Also witnessing the ceremony were Judge Duenas' sons and daughters; his brother Jose C. Duenas Jr.; his sisters--Carmen and husband Frank D. Perez, Estella and husband Bernabe Paulino, Isabel and husband Tomas Mendiola, Eliza (Mrs. Jesus P. Cruz), his sister Maria, and nephew Luis L. Duenas.

In addition, the judge's parents in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Vicente Calvo of Barrigada, witnessed the ceremony.

Monsignor Flores, apostolic administrator of the diocese of Agaña, and Governor Camacho are first cousins of Judge Duenas.

"I will do my best to see that there is a more efficient administration of justice and that everyone will be accorded equal protection before the law," the highest-ranking judge on the island said shortly after the swearing-in.

Judge Duenas received his commission Monday from the Department of Justice, following President Nixon's signing of his certificate of appointment.

Early this month, he travelled to Washington D.C. to appear before a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on his appointment to the federal bench. In what was reported as a "favorable reception" from the committee members, Judge Duenas was impressive in his testimony during the hearing, and his appointment was sent to the U.S. Senate.

Senate confirmation came on December 10, and the next day President Nixon signed his certificate of appointment, thus making

him the first Guamanian jurist to be elevated to the prestigious federal bench.

Judge Duenas is the sixth-born in the family of 11 children of the late Jose C. Duenas and his wife, Concepcion. He is married to the former Juanita Calvo, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Vicente Calvo of Barrigada. They are the parents four sons--Christopher 14, Vincent 12; Ricardo, 6; and David, seven months; and 3 daughters--Therese, 13; Zerlina, 9; and Joanna, 7.

Judge Duenas graduated from the Guam Institute High School in 1938, in 1946, two years after Guam's liberation during World War II, he departed for the mainland to attend Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

During his two years at Aquinas, he was a schoolmate of the late Dr. Ricardo C. Flores and his brother Msgr. Felixberto Flores; and the Reverend Father Zollo Camacho, now pastor of the Barrigada parish.

In 1948, Judge Duenas transferred to the University of Michigan to complete his studies for a Bachelor's Degree in History. He also remained at the University and earned his Juris Doctor in law, then returned to Guam and became the island's assistant attorney general.

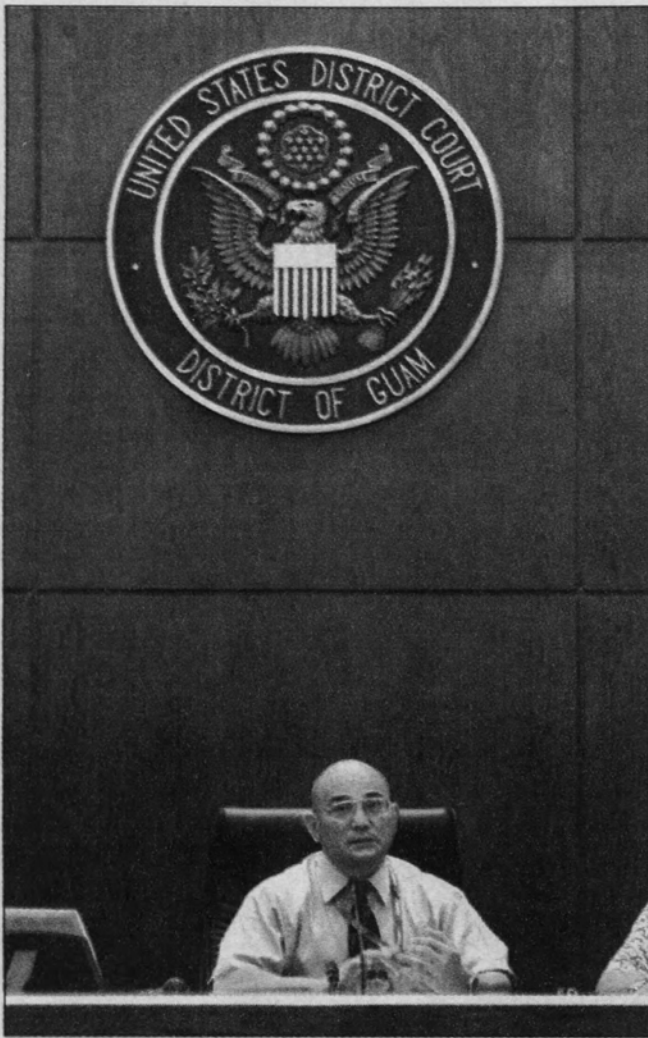
Judge Duenas was then appointed director of Land Management in May 1957, but vacated that position three years later to become judge of the Island Court in 1960.

In 1962, Judge Duenas began his association with the federal bench. The Chief Judge of the U.S. Courts of Appeals, Ninth Circuit Court in San Francisco, appointed him a designated judge of the District Court in Guam, and presided in court whenever U.S. Judge Paul D. Shriver was off-island.

Judge Duenas has handled District Court cases since mid-October, 1969, following Shriver's retirement from the federal bench last September 30.

The difference between delegating authority and passing the buck depends on who's doing it.





Darryl Bautista/Pacific Daily News

District Court gets new home

By Tanya M.C. Mendiola
Pacific Daily News

Guam is ready to prosecute criminal offenders in the new high-tech, multimillion-dollar U.S. District Court of Guam courthouse in Anigua.

Although the court officially was opened July 5, a dedication is planned for 5:30 p.m. Aug. 4 at the new facility.

"This is the culmination of eight years of planning and effort," said Judge John Unpingco yesterday during a media tour of the court.

To date, the unfinished courthouse has cost more than \$20 million, a figure which is expected to increase when construction is completed.

The impressive large courtroom — with blue carpeting, state-of-the-art audio/visual equipment, cherry wood panels and furniture, subtle lighting and a white dome ceiling — is wired to accommodate and serve the needs of the attorneys, judicial staff and the public.

Brand new: U.S. District Judge John Unpingco answers questions during a media tour of the new U.S. District Court of Guam courthouse in Anigua yesterday.

"We do serve the public and we are going to be even more user-friendly," Unpingco said. "We are equipped for what comes in the future."

The courthouse's exterior and interior design consist of sleek, polished granite floors, with sturdy columns at the entrance.

Currently, about 20 employees of the court, including the U.S. Marshals Service, are housed in the building owned by local businessman Mark Pangilinan.

The U.S. General Services Administration entered into a 10-year lease with M.V. Pangilinan Enterprises Inc. and will pay \$1.27 million in rent annually.

Increased security and improved accommodations are some reasons for the court's relocation from the Pacific News Building in Hagåtña earlier this month, Unpingco said.

Attorney Jay Arriola, Guam Bar Association president, joined Unpingco yesterday and said the new courthouse would benefit attorneys as well as the public.

"The high-tech capacity of this courthouse will bring Guam up to par with any courthouse in the nation," he said. "This court has one of the highest caseloads in the country. We will be able to streamline litigation and (work) cases faster."

Pacific Daily News, Saturday, July 29, 2000, Page 2.

Federal magistrate named

By Theresa Merto
Pacific Daily News
tmerto@guampdn.com

The U.S. District Court of Guam has always operated with one full-time judge.

Come Monday, that will all change.

The Guam Judiciary announced yesterday that Superior Court of Guam Judge Joaquin V. E. Manibusan will vacate the position and become a federal magistrate at the U.S. District Court of Guam.

Manibusan is scheduled to be sworn in tomorrow and will begin his new job on Monday, said District Court of Guam Judge John Unpingco.

"We never had two judges on the court. This is very historic," Unpingco said. "I think this is a great first for our territory, and it will be good service for our people."

Manibusan likely will handle initial appearances when defendants are arrested, hear motions and discovery disputes and handle misdemeanor cases among other duties, Unpingco said.

On behalf of Gov. Felix Camacho, governor's spokesman Shawn Gumataotao congratulated Manibusan on the new position.

TO THE POINT

▲ The Guam Judiciary announced yesterday that Superior Court of Guam Judge Joaquin V. E. Manibusan will vacate the position and become a federal magistrate at the U.S. District Court of Guam.

"Judge Manibusan comes from a family of judges who have contributed much to the growth of the judicial system on Guam," Gumataotao said. "(It) is a big loss for the Superior Court and a big gain for the District Court."

Position

Unpingco said the much-needed position has been in the works for about five years because Guam was left out of the Federal Magistrate's Act.

"In fact, we had to go back and get the law changed," Unpingco said. "And after that, we had to get the concurrence of the Ninth Circuit Judicial Council before we (could) get a magistrate judge."

Even then, Guam was only going to receive \$20,000 to hire a part-time judge.

"So then we went back, and I

AT A GLANCE

▲ Judge Joaquin Manibusan received a B.A. in political science and his law degree from the University of California, Berkeley. Prior to becoming a judge in the Superior Court of Guam in 1995, he served as a sole practitioner and assistant attorney general.

made a presentation before the Ninth Circuit Judicial Council saying, "Look guys, I am a one-man band out there, and it is very difficult because the cases are rising — they are really multiplying," Unpingco said.

The approval eventually came through, the money was allocated and a selection process for the magistrate's position began. About 15 people from Guam and off island applied.

"We got a very good field of candidates," Unpingco said.

And in the end, Manibusan was selected.

"His judicial experience was really good, and he's handled quite a few tough cases," Unpingco said. "Overall, he was just a very, very strong applicant."

'Very dedicated'

In a release, Superior Court Presiding Judge Alberto Lamorena praised Manibusan for his "work ethic" and "tireless service" to the Superior Court bench for the last eight years.

"Judge Manibusan followed in his father's footsteps as a very dedicated and disciplined jurist," Lamorena said.

"To add to his credit, he also vigorously promoted the use and protection of the Chamorro language in his courtroom by speaking and rendering decisions in our native language."

Supreme Court of Guam Chief Justice F. Philip Carbullido and Lamorena said in a release that there is an immediate need to fill the position that will be left vacant by Manibusan this week.

Gumataotao said the Judicial Council and the Guam Bar Association each may submit a list of nominees to fill the vacancy in the Superior Court.

"At that time, Gov. Camacho will review those and then select a new judge to sit on the Superior Court of Guam," Gumataotao said.

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