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UMM alum Gildea named associate justice

Summary: Governor Tim Pawlenty has appointed UMM alumna Lorie Gildea '83 as Supreme Court Associate Justice. Gildea recalls her UMM experience: "In short, the day I decided to attend UMM was one of the best days of my life,"

(January 10, 2006)-"...the day I decided to attend UMM was one of the best days of my life," said Lorie Gildea in a recent interview. Gildea has been appointed by Governor Tim Pawlenty as a Supreme Court Associate Justice, a role which will offer her a new opportunity to share her judicial talents with the people of the state of Minnesota.

"I was honored and humbled by the responsibility of serving the people of Minnesota on the Supreme Court," said Gildea of her reaction following the appointment. Gildea will fill the position of Russell Anderson who was appointed Supreme Court Chief Justice following the retirement of Chief Justice Kathleen Blatz.

Serving the people at the court level is not a new role for Gildea, who has served since September 2005 as a Hennepin County District Court judge. She was also assistant county attorney for Hennepin County and associate general counsel for the University of Minnesota where she litigated cases on behalf of the University in federal and state courts and before administrative agencies. One such case of notoriety was *Regents of the University of Minnesota v. Clem Smith Haskins*.

"I have a broad-based perspective that I think will serve me well on the court," said Gildea. "I practiced at a large law firm in Washington, D.C., where I represented clients in courtrooms across the country. For the next 11 years, I had the honor and the privilege of representing the University of Minnesota as in-house counsel in courts across Minnesota and before the United States Supreme Court. Before my appointment to the Hennepin County District Court, I was prosecuting white collar crime in the Hennepin County Attorney's Office."

Her task as a Supreme Court Associate Justice will be to review decisions of lower courts to determine if the lower courts correctly applied the law.

Gildea completed her four-year undergraduate education at UMM in three years with a 4.0 (A) grade point average. She was named a Scholar of the College, a member of the Dean's List and received a Medal for Outstanding Undergraduate. She holds a juris doctorate from Georgetown University Law Center where she graduated magna cum laude in 1986.

She is a member of the Minnesota Supreme Court Advisory Committee on Rules of Civil Procedure, and serves on the Executive Committee, the Board of Governors and the Governing Council, Civil Litigation Section, all of the Minnesota State Bar Association. Gildea is the author of an article, "Sifting the Dross: Expert Witness Testimony in Minnesota after the Daubert Trilogy," which was published in the *William Mitchell Law Review*. She is also profiled in a book by UMM Chancellor Sam Schuman, titled *Old Main: Small Colleges in Twenty-First Century America*, published by Johns Hopkins University Press.

So, where is UMM's place among Gildea's many accomplishments and her most recent accolade? How did her UMM

experience help to shape who she has become?

"I grew up in a town of approximately 300 people (no stoplights and no street signs), and there were 33 students in my high school graduating class. Even though I grew up in a small place, I was a teenager with big dreams. Attending a small college like UMM allowed me to realize those dreams. At UMM I was able to participate in things that were important to me from the very beginning, and to assume leadership roles when I was ready. I was exposed to new ideas, taught to think and to take risks, while in an environment that made me feel safe and unique. I never felt like I was just one more number in a long line of numbers. I felt valued and I felt relevant. In short, the day I decided to attend UMM was one of the best days of my life," said Gildea.

Gildea's parents, Roger and Pollie Skjerven, still live in her hometown of Plummer in northwestern Minnesota. Gildea and her husband, legislative aide Andy Gildea, live in Minneapolis.

PHOTO: Judge Lorie Gildea accepts appointment to the Minnesota Supreme Court. Justice Russell Anderson, right, was named chief justice by Gov. Tim Pawlenty. Don Davis / The Forum

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