

ASSOCIATION OF BLACK JUDGES OF MICHIGAN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 23, 2024

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Association of Black Judges of Michigan Returned to Historic Idlewild for its Biennial Educational Retreat

IDLEWILD, Mich- Members of the Association of Black Judges of Michigan (ABJM) gathered in Idlewild, Michigan over the weekend of July 19 through July 21, 2024, to attend the Straker/Langster Judicial Education Retreat. This year's Retreat was named to honor the legacies of the Hon. D. Augustus Straker, Michigan's first Black judge, and the Hon. Percy J. Langster, Michigan's and America's first Black elected prosecutor. Prosecutor Langster's elected jurisdiction was Lake County, Michigan—the home of Idlewild. The ABJM was last in Idlewild as group in July 2022.

The theme of the retreat was 'Honoring Our Trailblazers and Educating Our Future'. "This theme is a reminder to pay homage to the visionaries who came together to found ABJM and to renew our commitment to prepare the way for those on the path to the bench," said 34th District Court Judge Lisa M. Martin who serves as the President of the ABJM.



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This retreat is the first educational program offered by the ABJM since becoming an accredited provider of mandatory continuing judicial education. Earlier this year, the Michigan Continuing Judicial Education Board approved the ABJM as an accredited provider. Judges who fully attended the retreat will receive six credits towards their mandatory continuing judicial education requirements.

The educational sessions included topics on judicial ethics, DEI in the judiciary, best practices for handling sovereign citizen cases, rural and urban poverty and perceived fairness, and contempt of court. Michigan Supreme Court Chief Justice Elizabeth Clement and State Court Administrator Tom Boyd gathered with the judges on Friday afternoon for an informal town hall meeting. “We were grateful to be joined by the Chief Justice and State Court Administrator to have candid discussions about issues that matter to our membership,” said Judge Martin.

The Retreat ended with a worship service on Sunday at the First Baptist Church of Idlewild.

The Association of Black Judges of Michigan was found in 1979.



Photo courtesy of the ABJM.