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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

Mayor Fulop Nominates New Municipal Court Judges to Fill Vacancies Left Open by State Appointments

JERSEY CITY - **Mayor Steven M. Fulop** announced today his appointment of Rahat Chatha and Paul Scalia for two positions in the Municipal Court, to fill vacancies left open after two of Jersey City's Municipal Court judges were recently appointed and confirmed by the New Jersey State Senate to serve on the Hudson County Superior Court, Judge Carlo Abad and Judge Margaret Marley.

The nominations will be on the agenda for the next City Council meeting scheduled for April 15, 2021. Upon confirmation by the City Council, Ms. Chatha will serve as a part-time Municipal Court judge, while current part-time Municipal Court Judge Karen DeSoto will fill one of the current full-time vacancies. Mr. Scalia has served as an Assistant Municipal Prosecutor for Jersey City for the past 20 years and will be appointed as a full-time judge.

"The appointment of our two esteemed judges to Superior Court speaks to the fact that we have only the best judges in our courts, and I know these new judges will expand upon those efforts to cultivate a court system the community can trust," said **Mayor Fulop**. "Jersey City has one of the busiest municipal court vicinages in New Jersey, and these three new judges bring with them a tremendous wealth of knowledge and experience to help best serve the local community with a diverse and fair judicial system."

As an Assistant Municipal Prosecutor for the City of Jersey City since 2001, Paul Scalia has a unique familiarity with the sensitive issues and intricacies in dealing with matters specific to the local community.

"Having served the citizens of the City of Jersey City as an Assistant Municipal Prosecutor for the past 20 years, it is an honor for me to be nominated to serve as a Municipal Judge in one of the most dynamic and diverse cities in the nation – the City that I was born and raised in," said **Paul Scalia**.

"These nominees will ensure that Jersey City continues to have the most problem-solving, public safety-focused municipal courthouse in New Jersey. Additionally, A.P. Scalia has been among our most open-minded prosecutors willing to consider both sides of an argument, which is the most important quality of an effective jurist," said **Chief Municipal Prosecutor Jake Hudnut**.

Raised in Jersey City, Rahat Chatha has also spent her entire professional career here, most recently focusing on social services. Ms. Chatha has specific experience with both the courts in Hudson County and the community by way of her legal and social service work in Jersey City.

"I am honored and excited to join a team of experienced and objective individuals. I will aspire daily to bring justice for the residents of Jersey City," said **Rahat Chatha**. "I hope to inspire others within my community to have greater confidence in our judicial system and pursue their desired path. I am deeply appreciative of the confidence and consideration that Mayor Fulop and Jersey City Council Members have placed in me."

Judge Karen DeSoto worked for Jersey City as an Assistant Municipal Prosecutor and then as Corporation Counsel in the early 2000s. She has since represented a range of cases in her private practice, from civil rights and employment law, to municipal corporations and everything in between. Since 2018, she has served as a part-time Jersey City Municipal Court Judge.

"I started my service to Jersey City over twenty years ago, as Assistant Municipal Prosecutor and then as the first Hispanic female and the youngest person to hold the office of Corporation Counsel in the City. It's a privilege to use my years of experience to continue to serve the people of Jersey City. I'm looking forward to expanding my role with the courts," said **Judge Karen DeSoto**.

"On behalf of the entire Jersey City Municipal Court staff, we are elated to have such qualified, skilled, and highly regarded members of the community who have excelled in a wide range of positions in the legal field, up for appointment to deliver justice and broaden services to the community," said **Wendy Razzoli, Municipal Court Director**.

Earlier this week, Mayor Fulop announced the appointment of Judge Ramy Eid as the new Jersey City Chief Municipal Judge to replace Judge Carlo Abad. Judge Eid will assume responsibility for managing one of the largest case dockets in New Jersey. The Mayor's Municipal Court appointments will be on the City Council agenda at the next meeting on April 15, 2021.

All media inquiries should be directed to Kimberly Scalcione at kscalcione@jcnj.org.