

Press Release



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Rock County judge Ashley Morse recognized for advancing diversity in the legal system

MADISON, Wis. (May 6, 2026) — Rock County Circuit Court Judge Ashley Morse is the 2026 recipient of the Diversity & Inclusion Trailblazer Award, recognizing contributions that enhance diversity and inclusion within Wisconsin’s legal profession.

The award is presented by the State Bar of Wisconsin’s Diversity & Inclusion Oversight Committee.

Judge Morse was appointed by Gov. Tony Evers in 2022 and elected the following spring to Branch 4 in Rock County. “Notably, she is the first woman of color to serve in this role,” her nominators said.

Prior to taking the bench, Judge Morse worked for the Wisconsin Public Defender, where she was a leader in diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. She continues that work as a judge, volunteering to serve on committees to help ensure judicial conferences and presentations include diverse topics and inclusive speakers.

“This work has not been easy, but she never backed down on the promotion of these issues, because she understands that our judiciary must be equipped with the skills to address every litigant before them. She is the very definition of a trailblazer,” said the award committee.

The Diversity & Inclusion Trailblazer Award recognizes an individual who contributes to and enhances diversity and inclusion within the Wisconsin legal profession.

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ABOUT THE STATE BAR OF WISCONSIN

The State Bar of Wisconsin is the integrated professional association, created by the Wisconsin Supreme Court, for attorneys who hold a Wisconsin law license. With more than 25,000 members, the State Bar aids the courts in improving the administration of justice, provides continuing legal education for its members, and assists Wisconsin lawyers in carrying out community service initiatives to educate the public about the legal system and the value of lawyers. For more information, visit wisbar.org.

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Rock County Circuit Court Judge Ashley Morse is the recipient of the 2026 Diversity & Inclusion Trailblazer Award. (Photo courtesy of the State Bar of Wisconsin)