

Judge Susan Sniegowski: Diving into Mentoring

One can literally say that Judge Susan Sniegowski gets along “swimmingly” with kids in the Ludington area. In fact, as a longtime competitive swimmer and coach, Judge Sniegowski has put those skills to use for their benefit.

When she isn’t presiding over her docket in the 51st Circuit Court in Mason and Lake Counties, where she has served since 2015, Judge Sniegowski can often be found at the pool, coaching local kids ranging from 5 to 18 years old in several recreational swimming leagues.

“I believe that engaging children in positive activities, such as youth sports or clubs, helps them develop into well-rounded individuals,” Judge Sniegowski explained. “My own experiences with competitive swimming have taught me perseverance, goal setting, time management, endurance, and the benefit of hard work. I hope I can pass this on to future generations.”

Currently, she coaches the year-round Ludington Recreation Swim Team, which competes through USA Swimming in both Michigan Swimming and the West Michigan Swim League.

Swimming and coaching have been such a big part of Judge Sniegowski’s life that it is hard to determine whether her law career was built around that or vice versa. She began coaching while she was still in high school and continued through college. Although she took occasional breaks from it—during law school, before her son was born—she kept returning to it, even while she was building her law practice and now as a judge.

“I believe it is important to be involved in my community outside the courtroom because it provides balance and it allows me to be actively engaged with the people I serve,” shared Judge Sniegowski.

Speaking of engagement, Judge Sniegowski recently experienced her two worlds as coach and judge overlapping when she had the opportunity to swear in one of her former swimmers to the Michigan Bar. In addition, the attorney who moved for her admission was also one of Judge Sniegowski’s former swimmers.

“When I started practicing law in Northern Michigan, there were very few female attorneys, so I am very proud to see young women that I worked with as swimmers pursue careers in the law,” Judge Sniegowski said. “I hope my work and my involvement with local youth inspires others to further their education and consider careers in the law.”