

# United States District Court

## District of Nebraska

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LAURIE SMITH CAMP  
Chief United States District Judge

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEBRASKA

**MAY 23, 2016**

Nebraska's United States District Court Judges announced today their selection of Susan M. Bazis and Michael D. Nelson to join the court as United States Magistrate Judges in the coming year.

Judge Bazis has served on the Douglas County Court bench since 2007, and was presiding judge of that court for four years. Her innovative leadership has been widely recognized in Nebraska's bar and judiciary. She is the recipient of the UN-O School of Criminology and Criminal Justice Rising Star Award, the Nebraska Supreme Court's Distinguished Judge--Service to the Community Award, the National College of Probate Judges Treat Award for Excellence, and the Nebraska State Bar Foundation's Public Service Award. Judge Bazis will take the United States Magistrate Judge bench on January 1, 2017, filling the vacancy created by the retirement of Magistrate Judge Thomas D. Thalken.

Mike Nelson is an Omaha trial lawyer, practicing primarily in the area of federal criminal defense. Nelson serves as an adjunct professor at the UN-O School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, and is also a recipient of its Rising Star Award. He is a member of a select group of attorneys recognized by Nebraska's federal judges as highly qualified to receive court appointments to represent defendants charged with felony offenses. His peers have honored him with the Criminal Justice Act Jury Acquittal Award and Dedication to Justice Award. Nelson will fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Magistrate Judge F.A. Gossett, III, on June 30, 2017.

"Nebraska's federal court, and the people it serves, are very fortunate to welcome such highly qualified individuals to our bench," said Laurie Smith Camp, Chief United States District Judge. "The district judges are grateful to the Merit Selection Panel, led by Professor Collin Mangrum of Creighton Law School, for its conscientious work, helping to ensure the selection of new Magistrate Judges with outstanding experience, intellect, work ethic, temperament, and commitment to justice."

Nebraska has three United States Magistrate Judge positions, two with chambers in Omaha and one in Lincoln. Magistrate Judges are independent judicial officers, serving terms of eight years with potential for renewal. They are responsible for

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the management of most pre-trial proceedings in federal civil and criminal matters, the trial of misdemeanor cases, and may preside over civil trials with the consent of the parties. Magistrate Judge nominees are subject to FBI and IRS background checks before taking office. The current salary for the position is \$186,852.

**For further information, contact:**

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