

# Judge Spencer Levine

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In a few short minutes of meeting with Judge Levine, one quickly recognizes this is an intelligent man with an affable manner. I first met Judge Levine when he interviewed in 2008 for a vacancy on the Fourth District Court of Appeal. It is no secret that despite the potentially anxious environment of a JNC interview, Spencer Levine quickly placed the entire judicial nominating commission at ease with his genuine demeanor and self-deprecating humor. Although I cannot recall the specific quip he made, his sincerity and good nature made a lasting impression. The legal community witnessed this same esprit de corps at Judge Levine's investiture proceeding on August 28, 2009. Afterwards, Judge Levine guilelessly joked that it felt similar to a wedding, then rapidly followed with the sobering recognition that the investiture was a humbling experience.

Since his appointment by Governor Charlie Crist and investiture to the Fourth District Court of Appeal, Judge Levine has focused on his personal creed – “lead by example” and “build coalitions.” Judge Spencer Levine commenced his dedication to public service after graduation from the University of Miami, School of Law when he worked as an Assistant State Attorney in Palm Beach County for the 15th Judicial Circuit State Attorney's Office. After nine years, Judge Levine continued his commitment to serving this county's citizenry as General Counsel for the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office. While working in private practice, Judge Levine flexed his legal skill in Florida's appellate courts and Federal appellate court by writing many appellate briefs and attending oral arguments.

Perhaps the most significant public service contribution to date, however, was his work as Director of Florida's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit. Serving the citizens in Florida in this role of leading a large organization, including 27 lawyers, 30 financial analysts, and 146 sworn officers in 9 statewide offices, Judge Levine learned to hone his coalition-building skill, as well as his lead by example characteristic. The Medicaid Fraud Control Unit is responsible for policing what has become Florida's \$16 billion per year Medicaid program. Medicaid Fraud costs Floridians hundreds of millions of dollars each year when health care providers bill for services never performed, over bill for services provided, or bill for tests, services and products which are medically unnecessary. As Director of the Unit, Judge Levine oversaw all criminal investigations and prosecutions of provider fraud, kickbacks, self-referrals, patient brokering, civil false claims and qui tam actions. In addition to investigating fraud committed by health care providers, Judge Levine's Unit also investigated and prosecuted patient abuse and neglect and exploitation of the elderly, ill and disabled residents of long term care facilities such as nursing homes, facilities for the mentally and

physically disabled and assisted care living facilities. Under Spencer Levine's leadership as Director of Medicaid Fraud Unit, the citizens of the State of Florida recouped over \$200 million in qui tam, or whistleblower, cases.

When asked what drives Judge Levine in search of equity or fairness, he responds that he likes to strike a work-life balance. Although very conscientious in his work ethic and pursuit of justice, Judge Levine values his family time. Married for eighteen years to Judith Levine, General Counsel of the Broward County Sheriff's Office, Judge Levine and his wife are the proud parents of three beautiful daughters, Rachel, Hannah, and Tamar. When not reading briefs, researching the law, or penning opinions (yes, the old fashioned way), Judge Levine enjoys taking his girls to the Florida Panthers games. With Judge Levine's conscientious approach to cases, fair-minded internal compass, broad legal experience, he clearly is an asset to the Fourth District Court of Appeal.

Ms. Rockenbach is Chair of the Palm Beach County Bar Association Professionalism Committee and Immediate Past Chair of the Fourth District Court of Appeal Judicial Nominating Commission

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