

# CURRICULUM VITAE

## ROBERT F. HARRIS

### Education

Graduated from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign with a Bachelor of Science Industrial Engineering; and DePaul University College of Law with a Juris Doctor. Admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1991.

### Employment History

Attorney with the Office of the Cook County Public Guardian from 1991 through the present. Appointed Public Guardian in 2004. Responsible for 3 Divisions: Adult Guardianship Division, where the office is the court appointed guardian of the person and/or estate for approximately 600 adults with cognitive disabilities, manages approximately \$100 million in estate assets, and has recovered over \$40 million in assets stolen from the adults the office serves; Juvenile Division appointed attorney and guardian ad litem for approximately 6000 children in abuse and neglect proceedings; and Domestic Relations Division, where the office is appointed child representative for approximately 600 children in contentious custody and divorce proceedings. The office has 237 employees including lawyers, paralegals, social workers, financial personnel, investigators, a psychologist and support staff.

Prior to becoming Cook County Public Guardian held the following positions with the Cook County Public Guardian Office: Chief Deputy, Courtroom Supervisor, Lead Attorney, Staff Attorney, and Courtroom Support. Lead attorney for children in highly publicized cases. Acted as the Legislative Coordinator where he researched, drafted and advocated within the Illinois State Legislature for the enactment of child welfare and adult guardianship legislation.

Observed and analyzed juvenile courts in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Salvador Brazil, and Rio de Janeiro Brazil to develop ideas for possible enhancement of Cook County processes.

While a law student and briefly after graduation worked as a 711 Senior Law Student and Graduate at the Cabrini Green Legal Aid Clinic represented indigent clients in criminal, civil and administrative proceedings. Drafted and argued contested motions in criminal, misdemeanor, juvenile and housing courts. Also, represented clients in social security and unemployment administrative hearings.

Worked for Westinghouse Electric Corporation from 1981 through 1983 as both a Quality and Manufacturing Engineer in the Defense and Motor Controls Divisions. Worked as Systems Sales Engineer at Honeywell, Inc. from 1983 through 1986.

### Administrative Experience

As Public Guardian, administers a government office with an approximate \$18 million budget and a staff of over 200 employees that includes a union and non-union labor force. Worked in the administrative unit of the office responsible for capital equipment and other inventory purchases, as well as developing the budget to present to the County Board. Worked in all phases of hiring, promotion, discipline and termination of employees.

As a Manufacturing Engineer with Westinghouse Electric Corp., acted as project manager for various industrial projects. As a System Sales Engineer and project lead for Honeywell, Inc., responsible for the coordination of a team of employees to draft and present contract proposals for temperature control and energy systems for large industrial projects.

### Speeches and Lectures

- Illinois State University; "Consider the Children" Lecture Series (1999)
- New York University Public Interest Law Fair; "Opportunities in Child Law" (1999)
- Office of the Inspector General, DCFS; Child Welfare Ethics Forum, Panelist (2000)
- National Black Child Development Institute; National Conferences, Lead Presenter (1998, 2000, 2001)

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- Child Welfare League of America; Third National Institute Kinship Care Conference, Lead Presenter (2001)
- National Bar Association; Juvenile Justice Seminar (2002)
- ISBA Law Education Program; Step by Step Appeals in Child Custody (2012)
- Black Women Lawyers Association, “Juvenile Justice: The Crossroads of Protecting Children and Community (2013)

### Teaching Experience

- Loyola University; Trial Practice, Volunteer Faculty (1997)
- John Marshall College of Law; Guest Lecturer, Law Program for Social Workers (1998, 2000)
- Spertus College; Law, Government, and Practices of Human Services Organizations, graduate level (2000 - 2001)
- University of Chicago; Guest Lecturer, Legal Clinic (2001, 2002)
- Northwestern University School of Law; Defense Lawyers and Prosecuting Attorneys Course (July 2003)

### Professional Affiliations and Activities

- Cook County Child Death Review Committee (former member)
- Chief Judge Circuit Court of Cook County, Family Justice Leadership Curriculum Advisory Council and Clinical Services Expert Panel (former member)
- National Black Child Development Institute DCFS, Family Options Committee (former member)
- Illinois Child Welfare Licensure Advisory Committee (former member)
- Cook County Juvenile Court’s 21st Century Strategic Planning Group (2002)
- Illinois Children’s Justice Task Force (former member)
- International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN), (former member)
- Aids Legal Counsel of Chicago, Board of Directors, Vice President (former member)
- Coordinated Advice and Referral Program for Legal Services (CARPLS), Board Member (former member)
- Child Welfare Advisory Committee (former member)
- Chicago Bar Association
- Cook County Bar Association
- DePaul University College of Law Schiller DuCanto and Fleck Family Law Center
- Leadership Greater Chicago Fellow (2007)

### Publications

Robert F. Harris et al., *A Response to the Recommendations of the University of Nevada Las Vegas Conference: Another Look at the Attorney/Guardian Ad Litem Model 6.3* University of Nevada Law Journal 1284-95 (2006).

Robert F. Harris et al., *When Disabled Homeowners Lose Their Homes For a Pittance in Unpaid Property Taxes: Some Lessons From In re Mary Lowe*, 5 NAELA J. 190-91 (2009).

### Awards

- Ray of Illinois, Humanitarian Award for Youth Advocacy (2005)
- DePaul Black Law Student Association, Appreciation Award (2005)
- Cook County Bar Association, Ida B. Platt Award (2008)
- Mitchell Moore Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Juvenile Justice (2008)
- National Association of Elder Law Attorneys, John J. Regan Writing Award (2010)
- DePaul College of Law Schiller DuCanto and Fleck Family Law Center, Outstanding Public Service Award