Then it was time for the Administration of Oath from her father as Charity Taylor one of Judge Stokes mentees held the bible. The Robing Ceremony was done by Judge Shirley Strickland-Saffold who came up and kept it real.

By JAMES W. WADE III

Staff Reporter

Angela R. Stokes was sworn in as Cleveland Municipal Court judge for her third full term Sunday, Jan. 29, 2012 at the Cleveland Public Library Louis Stokes Wing. Going into her 17th year Judge Stokes had Cleveland City Councilman Jeff Johnson serve as her Master of Ceremony.

To kicked things off, her Pastor Donald Hammer of Ashtabula, Ohio gave the invocation before Elder Fred Graves provided music selections for the afternoon. Remarks came from Cleveland City Councilman Martin J. Sweeney, Rev. Wardell Harris, State Sen. Shirley Smith, State Reps.

John Barnes Jr. and Bill Patmon, Councilman Kevin Conwell, and Ward 10 Leader Anthony Hairston.

During her term of service on the Cleveland Municipal Court bench, Judge Stokes was instrumental in establishing Project HOPE (Holistic Opportunities and Preventative Education), which is the Cleveland Municipal Court's program for offenders. Project HOPE's mission is to use the criminal justice system not only to stop the commission of these crimes, but also to see the offenders as victims in need of serious life changes to reduce recidivism and help them become positive, productive members in the community with legitimate gainful employment.

Linda Hood and Nadine Murphy both graduates of Project Hope gave testimonies about how not only Project Hope, but how Judge Stokes had spent time to change their lives.

One of the greater testimonies came when Ms. Murphy shared how her kids and family had given up on her, but she got it together in the program and now has an Associate Degree, Bachelors and almost completed her Masters Degree.

Through Project HOPE, referrals are made for the following services: alcohol and drug abuse assessments for recommended treatment and counseling (residential, intensive out patient and out patient), mental health assessments and recommended counseling, HIV and other STD screening, recovery support groups, vocational skills assessment and training, GED classes, social services, and temporary housing services.

Judge Stokes presides over Project HOPE's monthly compliance dockets where the participants are awarded certificates of achievement for their progress. Judge Stokes also established the "Come and See" Speakers Bureau where distinguished community speakers address the Project HOPE participants at the monthly compliance dockets. These speakers volunteer their services and their agencies have partnered with Project HOPE for the benefit of the participants. Some of the partners are the Cleveland Clinic, Cuyahoga County's Child Support Enforcement Agency, Cleveland Scholarship Program, Cornerstone of Hope, Dress For Success.

The Honorable Mary Kilbane who helped with Project HOPE spoke about how much she was inspired working with Judge Stokes and how they felt happy knowing they were making a

difference in people lives.

The Honorable Louis Stokes gave special remarks on how proud he was of his daughter. “All of my kids have done well and I am proud of them all, but Angie is the only one who went into Public Service,” said Congressman Louis Stokes (Retired).

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Judge Stokes graduated with honors from the University of Maryland, College Park, receiving her Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology. She received her Juris Doctor from the Howard University School of Law in
Washington, D.C.
and was admitted to practice law before the Supreme Court of Ohio, the United States District Courts of the Northern and Southern Districts of Ohio, and the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.

Judge Stokes is a member of the Association of Municipal and County Judges of Ohio and the Northern Ohio Municipal Judges Association, along with the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association, the Ohio State Bar Association, and Norman S. Minor Bar Association.