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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Appeal Milestone at Fourth Department**

For the first time in the history of the Appellate Division, Fourth Department, an appeal was heard by a panel comprised entirely of the women Justices of the Court.

On Thursday, January 10, 2019, a panel comprised of Justice Presiding Nancy Smith of Rochester, Justices Erin Peradotto and Shirley Troutman of Buffalo, and Justice Joanne Winslow of Rochester heard oral arguments in *Mancuso v Graham*, an appeal involving the post-divorce distribution of assets. That argument marked the first time in the Court's history that oral arguments in an appeal were heard solely by the Court's four female Justices.

"Honestly, we treat each appeal the same, no matter which judges of the Court are part of the panel hearing the appeal. It is clearly, however, an important milestone to have a panel comprised entirely of the Court's female Justices, and I am proud to have been a part of this moment in the Court's history," said Justice Nancy Smith of Rochester, who presided over the argument as the panel's most senior member. Justice Smith was designated to the Fourth Department in 2004, followed by Justice Peradotto in 2006, Justice Troutman in 2016, and Justice Winslow in 2017.



Hon. Nancy E. Smith



Hon. Erin M. Peradotto



Hon. Shirley Troutman



Hon. Joanne M. Winslow

Presiding Justice Gerald J. Whalen of Buffalo noted that the occasion marked “a proud moment in the Court’s history, which, although long overdue, is an occasion to celebrate and note. Given the trends of the last decade, which have seen women outpace men in law school enrollment nationwide, and the talented female attorneys that practice in the Fourth Department, I expect that in the not-distant future, a panel of this kind will not be unusual at all.”