

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### UH Law Center's Sondock Jurist-in-Residence Lecture to focus on artificial intelligence in the court system

*5<sup>th</sup> Circuit Judge Elrod will explore impact of future technology on judges and the law.*

**Feb. 15, 2019** — Judge Jennifer Elrod of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit will speak on artificial intelligence and the law as part of the University of Houston Law Center's jurist-in-residence program on Feb. 19.

Elrod will deliver the Justice Ruby Kless Sondock Jurist-in-Residence Lectureship in Legal Ethics on the topic: "Trial by Siri: AI Comes to the Courtroom."

Her talk will explore how artificial intelligence is relevant specifically to the role of judges in the court system, including issues involving the accuracy of these technologies, their possible future uses to assist or replace aspects of judging, and what, if anything, may be lost or gained as a result.

A graduate of Baylor, Harvard Law School, and a former state district judge, Elrod was appointed to the appellate bench by President George W. Bush in 2007. She is a member of the board of advisors for the Harvard Journal of Law & Public Policy, the board of directors of the Garland R. Walker Inn of Court, the Baylor University Board of Regents, and the American Law Institute. She has served as the board chair of the Texas Center for Legal Ethics, on the State Bar of Texas Committee on Pattern Jury Charges, and as the board chair of the Gulf Coast Legal Foundation (now Lone Star Legal Aid).

Elrod has been repeatedly recognized as a jurist, as well as for her pro bono work and contributions to the community. Most recently, she was recognized as the Harvard Federalist Society Alumni of the Year and by the Texas Association of Civil Trial and Appellate Specialists as the 2016-2017 Appellate Judge of the Year. She also was honored with the Texas Center for Legal Ethics 2015 Chief Justice Jack Pope Professionalism Award and has been named Judge of the Year by the Mexican-American Bar Association of Texas. She received the Judge Thomas Gibbs Gee award for her pro bono work and has twice received the President's Award from the Houston Bar Association.

Her publications include: "Don't Mess with Texas Judges: In Praise of the State Judiciary;" "For Good: Enriching Your Practice and Your Life Through Pro Bono and Community Service;" "Is the Jury Still Out?: A Case for the Continued Viability of the American Jury;" and "W(h)ither the Jury? The Diminishing Role of the Jury Trial in our Legal System."

"Through the Sondock Jurist-In-Residence Program, the Law Center brings outstanding jurists to the campus to speak on important legal topics and meet with UHLC faculty, alumni and students," said Law Center Dean Leonard M. Baynes. "These interactions will bring the Law Center community closer to the bench so we can learn from each other. It also will help inspire our students to be the next generation of outstanding jurists."

The Jurist-In-Residence program is named in honor of Justice Ruby Kless Sondock, a trailblazer in the law who graduated as valedictorian and one of only five women in the UH law school class of 1962. After practicing law for many years, Sondock was appointed to the 234th District Court in 1977, making her the first female state district judge in Harris County. She was appointed to the Texas Supreme Court in 1982, making her the first woman to serve in a regular session of the court. She was proclaimed a "Texas Legal Legend" by the litigation section of the State Bar of Texas in 2016.

The lecture will be 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Feb. 19, in Room 109 of the Bates Law Building at the University of Houston Law Center, 4604 Calhoun Road. Attendees will receive 1 hour of CLE credit. Click [here](#) to register.

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### **About the University of Houston**

The [University of Houston](#) is a Carnegie-designated Tier One public research university recognized with a Phi Beta Kappa chapter for excellence in undergraduate education. UH serves the globally competitive Houston and Gulf Coast Region by providing world-class faculty, experiential learning and strategic industry partnerships. Located in the nation's fourth-largest city and one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse regions in the country, UH is a federally designated Hispanic- and Asian-American-Serving institution with enrollment of more than 46,000 students.

### **About the University of Houston Law Center**

The [University of Houston Law Center](#) (UHLC) is a dynamic, top tier law school located in the nation's 4<sup>th</sup> largest city. UHLC's Health Law, Intellectual Property Law, and Part-time programs rank in the U.S. News Top 10. It awards Doctor of Jurisprudence (J.D.) and Master of Laws (LL.M.) degrees, through its academic branch, the College of Law. The Law Center is more than just a law school. It is a powerful hub of intellectual activity with more than 11 centers and

institutes which fuel its educational mission and national reputation. UHLC is fully accredited by the American Bar Association and is a member of the Association of American Law Schools.