

PRESS RELEASE

March 30, 2012

Chief United States District Judge Federico A. Moreno announced yesterday that Alicia M. Otazo-Reyes has been selected by the Court's district judges to be appointed United States Magistrate Judge. Ms. Otazo-Reyes will fill the magistrate judgeship position that will be vacated upon the retirement of Chief United States Magistrate Judge Stephen T. Brown. She will be assuming her new duties in the Miami Division as of April 12, 2012.

Ms. Otazo-Reyes earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Miami and her law degree from the University of Miami School of Law. She has served with distinction as Counsel at Legon, Ponce & Fodiman, P.A. for the past eight years. Prior to that service, she was Counsel at White & Case LLP and she served as a Career Law Clerk to retired Senior United States District Judge Shelby Highsmith for almost eleven years.

The announcement of Ms. Otazo-Reyes' selection culminates a broad search process that began last August. During that search, 49 applicants submitted their qualifications to a selection panel appointed by the Court. The selection panel reviewed those submissions and elected to interview 16 candidates in person. Those interviews resulted in the Panel's recommendation of 5 finalists to the Court. Finalists were interviewed by the Court's district judges in December 2011, at which time a preliminary selection was made. Ms. Otazo-Reyes', however, was not announced publicly pending completion of an FBI and IRS background investigation report. This report is standard to the appointment process and usually takes about four months to complete.

The procedures followed by the Court in this process are consistent with those approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States and documented in the Administrative Office of the United States Courts' publication entitled The Selection, Appointment, and Reappointment of United States Magistrate Judges, *Judges Information Series No. 2*.

Please contact Steven M. Larimore, Court Administrator • Clerk of Court, at (305) 523-5001 if you have any questions.

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