

Nidhi Kashyap

Milwaukee County Circuit Court Judge, Br. 25
Member Since 2022

When it comes to finding common ground and forging connections between people of different backgrounds, Nidhi Kashyap walks the walk.

“I am a people person, and I’ve learned that you can build a community everywhere.”

The daughter of Indian immigrants, Nidhi observed this lesson firsthand growing up within a supportive immigrant community in Madison.

“Because everyone was ‘away,’ in the sense that we lived far from our relatives in India and travel wasn’t always possible, we celebrated our milestones together. Without our biological families around, we created a sense of family.”

The value of chosen family—of created community—had a profound impact on Nidhi. She eventually attended both college and law school at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. While in college, Nidhi worked at the UW Campus Women’s Center, where she became interested in women’s leadership, especially within organizations working to make communities more just and equitable. It was the first of many roles Nidhi has assumed in a life dedicated to public service.

After she graduated from law school in 2007, Nidhi moved to Milwaukee where she began working at Friends of Abused Families, a domestic violence agency in Washington County. During this time, she also began volunteering as a mentor with Big Brothers Big Sisters, where she mentored her “little” for eight years.

“Big Brothers Big Sisters is the best volunteer experience I ever had. What a great way to build community with someone.”



Over the next decade, Nidhi worked as a staff attorney for Milwaukee County Child Support Services, a role that brought her to family court on an almost daily basis. In January 2018, then Chief Judge Maxine White appointed Nidhi as Assistant Family Court Commissioner.

In April 2022 Nidhi was elected to the Milwaukee County Circuit Court, Branch 25. Assigned to the Children’s Division, she presides over child welfare and delinquency cases.

Of all her accomplishments, Nidhi is most proud of being elected judge by the people.

“The community has put a tremendous amount of trust in me, which is very meaningful.”



As part of her campaign, Nidhi traveled all over the county meeting with constituents of vastly different backgrounds. She offers this campaign pro tip:

“The best way to meet people is at a fish fry. People are relaxed and the food is good.”

These days, Nidhi is most focused on higher risk kids and what judges can do to be part of the team to provide them with better opportunities. Part of that means helping revamp programming for the kids at highest risk of reoffending.

“Judges want to take a more active role in working with the kids post-sentencing.”

On the child welfare side of her work, Nidhi wants to tailor the plan for each case and make orders clearer for parents to follow so that fewer children experience separation from their families.

Within her work, Nidhi most enjoys talking to the kids.

“It’s so important to connect with them. I try to get to know them—who are they and what are they like outside of their worst moments. When you really talk to these kids, you realize they’re not so different from your own kids. Their mistakes are bigger, which should not be ignored, but they can do better and they do better when we get them services.”

In Nidhi’s household, public service is a family affair. She met her husband Chris while he was volunteering at Legal Action of Wisconsin and pursuing public interest law.

“Service is a big part of who we are. You have to try to be a helper in any way you can.”

Today, Nidhi and Chris reside in Wauwatosa, where they enjoy exploring the local shops and restaurants and socializing with their new neighbors. They also head to the lakefront as often as possible.

“It’s my favorite thing about the city. It’s so beautiful, so accessible. We like to go to the beach or walk along Lincoln Memorial. Further south, Seven Bridges is a favorite spot.”

Nidhi volunteers her time on the board of Lake Park Friends. She also remains in touch with her “Little Sister,” and recently attended her graduation from UW–Whitewater.



Nidhi’s calling for service made Rotary a natural fit. When she first attended a lunch with her friend Janet Protasiewicz, Nidhi was struck by the Four Pillars behind the podium, which she felt reflected her own ideals.

“They made a big impression on me. I felt like I was in a roomful of friends.”

Nidhi’s court schedule limits her ability to attend Tuesday lunches, but she takes advantage of Rotary’s social calendar in the evenings. She fondly recalls attending a Rotary dinner party and experiencing the same feeling she had at that first lunch, that she was among instant friends. She was also impressed by Nō Studios showing of *The 1619 Project* and the respectful conversations that ensued. She recently joined Rotary’s structural racism committee, which she feels relates to her work on the bench.

“I’m grateful to be a member of Rotary. I truly believe that any Rotarian is my friend, and I’m pretty ride or die with my friends.”