



Medina County DR Magistrate Jennifer Svec

**Medina County DR Magistrate Jennifer Svec, by Kate Feeks, Courthouse Reporter for CZ Court Reporter at [www.czcourtreporter.com](http://www.czcourtreporter.com)**

During my interview with Magistrate Jennifer Svec, Trial Magistrate for Judge Mary R. Kovack, it occurred to me how much I enjoy interviewing the Magistrates and individuals that I have met in the Domestic Relations Court. As I looked up from my notes at Magistrate Svec, I shared with her what I was just thinking.

I wasn't sure at the time why I had that thought but now I realize it was because I really agreed with everything she was telling me. As a parent of two young children, I know how important to be there for them-100%. As I talked further with Magistrate Svec, I knew by the look in her eyes that she knows what it takes to be a parent. I knew that she works hard at being a good example not only for her own children, but for all the children that she

sees everyday.

Magistrate Jennifer Svec came from a small town in Ohio where the “thing to do” was graduate from high school, get married and have children.

Not for Svec.

With the encouragement from her parents and the drive to be the first in her family to go to college and start a career, Svec had a different plan in mind. Svec explains “without the support of my parents I would never have been able to be where I am today.” From the beginning she had support from people in her life to reach her goals.

One such person was Canton Municipal Court Judge Mary Falvey who offered her an internship while she was still in college. “She allowed me to see what it was like to work in a court. It was a great experience to see if practicing law was really what I wanted to do”. All the while Judge Falvey continued giving her support and encouragement as she worked hard to reach her goals.

In 1996 Svec graduated with magna cum laude from Walsh University. In 1999 she graduated from Cleveland Marshall College of Law and was admitted to practice law in November of that same year. Svec then went on to a private practice where she stayed for seven years. During these seven years she practiced primarily in the areas of family law and domestic relations. It was that experience that Svec feels most prepared her for the job she holds today.

During her search to find the next step to expand her career and goals, Svec came across the position as Trial Magistrate for Judge Mary R. Kovack. Since she had extensive experience in domestic relations law, she felt she could help families get through the most difficult times in their lives.

In early 2007, Svec became a Trial Magistrate for Judge Mary R. Kovack. Her responsibilities include deciding pre-decree and post-decree motions and conducting hearings in divorce, parentage, child support, and domestic violence cases.

The most difficult part about the job she holds today is trying to find where the truth lies. "Everyone has their side of the story; I have to figure out who is giving me the truth."

Fortunately for Svec and the other Magistrates, Judge Kovack instituted programs to help them do their jobs. Some of these programs are the Case Services Assessment, The supervised Visitation Center, The Mediation Program, and the Legal Resource Center.

Case Services Assessment is provided to do background checks of families. These staff members meet with parents to identify any emotional, health, financial, academic, or occupational needs and refer the parents to the appropriate services. If requested, the staff will meet with children to discuss issues they may have regarding their family situations. Once evaluated, the staff will provide a report to the Judge or Magistrate to assist in the case.

The Supervised Visitation Center was established through the efforts of the Medina YMCA, the Board of County Commissioners, and the Medina County Domestic Court. This free program creates a safe environment for parents to peacefully transfer children from one home to the other. For those parents that the court requires to be monitored during parenting time, there are personnel available to supervise the visits to ensure appropriate interaction between parent and child.

The Mediation Program is a free program with a court appointed magistrate to handle all mediation with in the Court. The purpose is to assist the families in reaching an agreement on unresolved issues that they have brought before the court. These mediations are handled in an office setting rather than a courtroom.

The Legal Resource Center is a room provided with resources such as books, blank legal forms, and computer programs to assist in calculating spousal and child support as well as other resources to inform one in the legal process. A few days a month the center is staffed by volunteer attorneys and legal interns to assist people with legal questions and forms.

Judge Kovack has put all these programs together to assist the public. She believes in putting families first and she has created a network of services to

accomplish that goal. According to Svec "These programs give us the knowledge we need to do our jobs more efficiently and gives us more information to help us to make good decisions."

Svec has been married for ten years and has two young children. She enjoys kayaking. Although she has had a kayak for quite some time, she hasn't had the time to use it because of the demands of being a mother to young children. She also loves to read and go hiking. She was smiling proud to say she attempted to climb Mt. Katahdin in Maine and did so by making it to the top of the five mile climb.

It is that determination that helps Magistrate Svec reach her goals in both her profession and in her personal life. It is that determination that guides her in doing justice for the families that come through the Medina County Domestic Relations Court.