



Public Information Office
United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit

Office of the Circuit Executive · 95 7th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 · (415) 355-8800 · (415) 355-8901 Fax

NEWS RELEASE

June 25, 2015

Contact: David Madden (415) 355-8800

American Inns of Court Picks Two for Ninth Circuit Professionalism Award

SAN FRANCISCO – The American Inns of Court has for the first time selected two recipients for its prestigious Ninth Circuit Professionalism Award. This year’s winners are a distinguished federal judge from the Pacific Northwest and a respected Arizona lawyer. They will receive their awards on July 13, 2015, during the opening session of the 2015 Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference in San Diego.

Senior District Judge Robert J. Bryan of the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington is being honored for his judicial accomplishments, including his leadership in promoting collegiality and mentoring among the bench and bar in the Seattle-Tacoma area. Attorney Larry A. Hammond, a senior partner in the Phoenix law firm of Osborn Maledon, is being recognized as one of the deans of the Arizona criminal defense bar. Both men have had legendary professional careers spanning more than four decades.

Judge Bryan has served as a federal and state judge for more than 46 years. Nominated by President Reagan, he came onto the federal bench in 1986 and served as an active judge for 14 years. He took semi-retired senior status in 2000 but continues to carry a substantial caseload. He has sat by designation with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit multiple times and participated in circuit governance as a member of the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit and its Jury Committee. He also served as president of the U.S. District Judges Association and as a trustee of the Federal Judicial Center.

Judge Bryan has his chambers in the historic Tacoma Union Station Courthouse and was actively involved for seven years on a circuit committee that helped oversee the federal government’s acquisition and renovation of the historic railroad depot.

– more –

Before coming onto the federal bench, Judge Bryan had sat on the Kitsap County (Washington) Superior Court. He accepted a gubernatorial appointment to the court in 1967, was elected to the office in 1968, then re-elected in 1972, 1976 and 1980. He retired from the state bench in 1984. During his 17-year tenure, he served as a judge pro tem for the Washington State Court of Appeals and a justice pro tem for the Washington State Supreme Court, was elected president of the Washington State Association of Superior Court Judges, and was a member of boards and commissions involved in developing judicial qualifications and training standards.

A native of Bremerton, Washington, Judge Bryan received his B.A. from the University of Washington in 1956 and his J.D. from the UW School of Law in 1958. After serving two years in the Army Reserve, he practiced law in Bremerton with his father from 1959 to 1967.

In nominating him for the award, colleagues pointed to Judge Bryan's leadership in establishing the Puget Sound American Inn of Court in Tacoma. Chartered in 1987, it was the 25th Inn of Court in the nation, a milestone for then fledgling organization. More importantly, colleagues said, was Judge Bryan's unflagging support of the inn, which was renamed in his name in 2004.

"For so many reasons, it is difficult for us to envision the award being given to anyone other than Judge Bryan," wrote Magistrate Judge Karen L. Strombom in a letter of nomination that was co-signed by Pierce County (Washington) Superior Court Judge Stephanie A. Arend and accompanied by 38 letters of support from a who's who of the Washington bench and bar.

Senior Circuit Judge Michael Daly Hawkins and Circuit Judge Andrew D. Hurwitz of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, who have chambers in Phoenix and are themselves fixtures in the Arizona legal community, were similarly enthused in their letter nominating Mr. Hammond, describing his 40-year career as "the stuff of legends."

"Perhaps the most remarkable thing about Larry Hammond's career is his devotion to justice for all, regardless of the person's station in life," they wrote.

Examples of that dedication include Mr. Hammond's lengthy pro bono service as co-counsel for the NAACP in a mid-1970s suit seeking to desegregate Tucson public schools. The case concluded in 1981 with issuance of a federal court desegregation order that remains in force to this day. Also cited was Mr. Hammond's representation of defendants in nine federal death penalty cases originating in Arizona, New Mexico and Nevada, including one case spanning 11 years. Two of the cases ended with the release of prison inmates and all but one of the cases ended in a plea to something less than a death sentence.

Another noteworthy pro bono endeavor was Mr. Hammond's two decades of service as lead counsel on behalf of Arizona prison inmates who were to be moved from protective segregation into the general prison population. After lengthy litigation involving two trials held under seal, the state agreed not to move the inmates and developed a new policy for protective segregation.

Mr. Hammond is a founder and chair of The Justice Project sponsored by Arizona Attorneys for Criminal Justice, which organizes cadres of law school students to work with volunteer criminal defense lawyers on cases and case evaluations involving prison inmates. Since its formation in 1998, the project has screened requests for assistance from more than 5,000 prisoners.

While he has spent 30 years in private practice, Mr. Hammond's career also included two noteworthy tours of duty as a lawyer in the U.S. Department of Justice. He served as an assistant Watergate special prosecutor in 1973-74, then he returned to the DOJ during the Carter Administration, serving as the first deputy assistant attorney general under Attorney Generals Griffin Bell and Benjamin Civiletti.

Mr. Hammond received his B.A. from the University of Texas in 1967 and his J.D. in 1970 from the University of Texas Law School, where he graduated Order of the Coif and served as editor-in-chief of the Texas Law Review.

The American Inns of Court professionalism awards are given annually in all of the federal circuits to "a lawyer or judge whose life and practice display sterling character and unquestioned integrity, coupled with ongoing dedication to the highest standards of the legal profession and the rule of law." Other circuits have had two winners named, but this is the first time it has happened in the Ninth Circuit.

Senior Circuit Judge Mary M. Schroeder of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, a former board member of the American Inns of Court, will present the awards.

The Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference is authorized by law "for the purpose of considering the business of the courts and advising means of improving the administration of justice within the circuit." 28 U.S.C. § 333. Conferees include circuit, district, bankruptcy and magistrate judges working in federal courts in nine western states and two Pacific island territories; lawyers practicing in these courts; court staff; and special guests.

###